



LORD ALGY TAKES THE ODD

By Arthur Henry Vesey

THE murmur of Penelope's voice—an even monotone, grave yet pleasant—sounded faintly in the lower regions. Fanny listened a moment, leaning over the banister. And was her capable stepdaughter already resuming the even tenor of her domestic way? Calmly and competently Penelope was rebuking a sulky cook's undue passion for a policeman, whom she had regaled with beer the evening before. There was a finality, a firmness in Penelope's voice that made Fanny tremble.

Ah, yes, the cook, arms akimbo, could shriek defiance and give warning. But defiance would avail nothing to poor Fanny. Not tears, however copious; not cajolings, however artful! Penelope, immovable and austere, would take refuge behind the intrenchment of her Conscience. And even if the miracle happened, and frivolous Fanny could prevail against this too mighty Conscience, would not the Arm of the Law snatch the wavering trustee within its stronghold and slam the gates in Fanny's face?

Crushing the awful document between her fingers, Fanny went slowly to her sitting room.

That delightful apartment was flooded

with sunshine. It was late in November, but one might have thought spring was in the air, so gentle a breeze fluttered the Japanese curtains of green and gold at the open windows. She tossed the paper on a writing desk, then, her lips parted, turned a piquant face wistfully to the sky, deeply blue. Her birds—a Shama thrush, and Clarino—greeted her in joyous duet.

"Darlings," said Fanny unhappily, "I would let you go free—let you fly away to your mysterious happy lands, if it were not winter. I know what it is to be a prisoner now."

"Well, old girl?" mumbled a drowsy voice.

Startled, Fanny turned. Her brother Billy, his hair ruffled and his round, florid face half hidden in cushions, was blinking at her from the davenport.

She tried to smile, a mournful, twisted little smile.

"Well, Billy?" She crumpled nervously her handkerchief edged with black into a compact ball. "It's all over," she faltered.

Billy Merrick sat up, staring at her.

"I sneaked to your room," said slangy Billy, stifling a yawn, "while the old fossil was dropping out the will. It's all

right, I hope?" he demanded, looking at his sister with concern.

"It is dreadful, Billy—quite too dreadful!"

Fanny flung herself on the davenport beside him and buried her head on his shoulder.

"Is it as bad as that?" Billy patted her shoulder with a pudgy hand. "Has the old skinflint cut you off with a penny, Fan?"

"You mustn't call him names, but I *did* do everything I could to make him happy," said Fanny rather incoherently; "and he hasn't cut me off at all."

"Then do you mean that my late brother-in-law came a cropper—that he didn't have as much—"

"No; he was more than respectably rich," sobbed Fanny. "It isn't that."

Billy became more cheerful. He grinned at Fanny's birds over her shoulder.

"I know. It's the shock, of course. This will reading business is a rotten ordeal."

"No, it's a trust," said Fanny, in despair.

Billy pursed up his lips judiciously and considered.

"Oh, well, a trust isn't so bad. You are an extravagant little devil. A trust simply means that you have no bother about bookkeeping and things—no fuss or anxiety about investments. Your banker has all the worry, and you have all the cheques. A trust may be a canny proposition—for you."

"It isn't the trust I mind. It's the trustee—it's one of the trustees. Oh, what humiliation! What degradation!"

"If there is a trust there must be trustees, I suppose," he added hopelessly. "I'm not one of them?"

"No; Mr. Harmon is."

"H'm! A cold-blooded fish, Joshua Harmon," said Billy, determined to look on the bright side of things, "but honest as the day, and a dollar has to spin pretty nimbly to get away from his bony fingers. Well, who are the other trustees?"

"Pe—Pe—Penelope is the only one," said Fanny, looking at her brother beseechingly.

The determined smile that had irradiated Mr. Merrick's rubicund countenance vanished with an abruptness that was comic. At least, Fanny seemed to find it so. She laughed hysterically.

"Yes, Penelope! My own stepdaughter!"

"Gadzooks!" gasped Billy, his china blue eyes protruding.

"Yes, I am consigned to the fostering care of sedate Penelope! She is to chaperon me in my walks, I suppose. She will think it her duty to expurgate the newspapers, to see there is nothing improper in them. She will forbid me to read French novels. Perhaps she will open my letters before I am permitted to see them."

"Don't talk nonsense," cried Billy angrily. Like most men, Billy was cross and scolded when he should have been consoling. "Your precious stepdaughter will find that the rights of even a trustee are limited, that she can't tie you to her apron strings. It is the money bags I'm worrying about. Mark my word, Fanny, she will pull the strings of those money bags mighty tight."

"If it were only that!" said Fanny. Billy viciously poked the fire.

"The old curmudgeon! It is his revenge for your extravagance, I suppose. But cheer up; perhaps we can break the will. Penelope is of age, of course; still, it doesn't seem legal somehow."

"Mr. Harmon says it is, and that you can't break it. And if you could, I couldn't or wouldn't."

"Do for heaven's sake talk grammatically, even if you are excited!" scolded Billy. "I tell you, you can break that will."

"And I tell you I will not!" cried Fanny with spirit. "Besides," she added with a humility that made Billy wonder, "it is my duty to submit."

"Does Penelope think," exclaimed Billy, the more vehemently because he felt his helplessness, "that I am going to let you be the victim of the detestable spite of that husband of yours? By gad, I won't stand for it! I know how unhappy he made you while he lived. And is he to make you unhappy now he's

dead? Why, he only married you to sew on his buttons and to darn his socks and to tuck him into bye-bye—the old granny!”

“You mustn’t call him names,” said Fanny faintly.

“How often I’ve heard him sniffing and wheezing outside this very room!” continued Billy, working himself into a rage. “Do you remember the morning when he caught you smoking a cigarette—how he stuck his bald pate in the door and squeaked: ‘Mrs. Yard, have I not expressly forbidden you to smoke?’”

“And you glared at him like a basilisk,” interrupted Fanny reproachfully. “Poor, dear Yard, you frightened him so.”

“Didn’t I, eh? Oh, yes, he quailed before this eagle eye,” chuckled Billy. “Didn’t he come off his high horse, though? ‘I have brought you a box of jubes’—that’s how he capitulated. Lord! I can see that sticky little box now! ‘And there is a most instructive lecture,’ he went on, ‘at the Museum of Natural History on Fossils.’ Bah! And if you so much as smiled on a delectable bachelor—whew!”

“Don’t,” implored Fanny; “I shall never look at a man again as long as I live.”

“Of course not,” said Billy, smiling very wisely.

“I couldn’t if I wanted to,” faltered Fanny. “I haven’t told you the worst yet.”

“Not told me the worst!” echoed Billy in alarm. “There are other conditions?”

“Yes,” said Fanny in a faint voice.

“Name ’em!” Billy folded his arms and looked at his sister accusingly, as if she herself had drawn this monstrous will.

“If—if I marry again before I am thirty-five—” whispered Fanny. Emotion overcame her.

Billy counted sternly on his fingers. “Eleven years,” he said in a tragic voice.

“Contrary to the approval—”

“Not of Penelope!” Billy flung up his hands. “It is? Oh, Lord—oh, Lord!”

“If I do,” continued Fanny in a monotonous voice like a child reciting a dull lesson, “half of the principal held in trust for me is to revert to the estate, and to be used in building the Thomas Clayton Yard Library. You are to be one of the trustees—if that comforts you any.”

“I will fill that library with the most *risqué* novels that were ever published,” promised Billy grimly. “My poor Fanny, you *are* in a dickens of a fix. And yet you won’t try to break this will!”

“I can’t,” said Fanny meekly. “He made the conditions because he loved me so. It’s only to safeguard my future, Billy.”

“Bah, the old hypocrite!”

“You mustn’t—you mustn’t call him names,” beseeched Fanny. “And to think I always accused poor dear Yard of having no sense of humor!” she added, smiling mournfully.

“If Penelope’s sense of humor is as peculiar as her father’s—”

“Oh, Penelope will be reasonable; you’ll see.”

“She won’t. Penelope is a prig.”

“I am sure she will,” protested Fanny, somewhat faint-heartedly however. “Besides, the will tells her to be. Mr. Harmon says that my husband dictated these words himself. Would you like to hear them?”

Fanny took up the will from the writing desk and looked at her brother innocently—too innocently to deceive that astute young man.

“I should enjoy it a lot,” said Billy smacking his lips.

And Fanny read the wishes of the late Thomas as demurely and with as proper a reverence as he himself could have wished:

“And, confident in the belief that she will carry out my wishes, I hereby enjoin on my dear daughter Penelope that she accept the responsibility I place on her with an impartial and unprejudiced mind. I bid her expressly to realize that such stipulations as I make are not with the intention of causing embarrassment or humiliation to my beloved wife. I make them only with a sincere love for her, and the fervent desire that any future marriage she may contract may be wise and prudent.

“Such man, or men, as may aspire to the

hand of my beloved wife are to be subjected by my daughter Penelope to a cautious and conscientious scrutiny. Only after my said daughter shall have satisfied herself that such man or men as desire to enter into contract of marriage with my beloved wife are of stainless character and free from mercenary motive, shall the said daughter give her consent. But she will give due and conscientious heed to any and all candidates submitted for her inspection."

Fanny folded this unique will with a prim and careful neatness; only then did she dare look at her brother with a demure expectancy. Billy's rotund person was shaken with wild laughter.

"Little hypocrite! Your wise, solemn owl face doesn't deceive me a little bit. You dote on that will. You are going to eat it up, you love it so. Oh, my Fanny, what fun you will be having with the conscientious Penelope! What adventures! What junketings! But look out for that Inspector of Candidates! If Penelope should take a fancy to one of the candidates herself—by Jove, there is a disquieting thought! These quiet girls, you know—they're mighty deep."

"Pooh!" said Fanny with contempt. "Penelope is a suffragette."

II

DURING the lifetime of the late Thomas Yard one small, gloomy room of his large, dingy house had been consecrated to business. A shiny rolltop desk, with numerous pigeonholes and drawers, a swivel chair, a dozen files in a forbidding row on a wooden shelf, a typewriter—these were the paraphernalia of business. The sole concession to comfort and luxury was the shabby carpet—much worn where his feet had fidgeted beneath the desk (when he reflected on the depravity of his wife)—and a print, "The Deathbed of Lincoln."

This chamber of horrors Fanny had rarely entered. Her husband had given her to understand that no feminine fripperies were to be tolerated there. If ever Fanny had entered, it had been generally to coax a cheque out of him.

Penelope, however, had humbly served at the altar of business. For when she had taken her degree at Bryn

Mawr her father had urged her to round out her education with a three months' course at a school of stenography and typewriting. Penelope, always subservient to the parental will, had conscientiously undertaken the not uncongenial work, and had saved her father both his temper and his dollars.

And now Penelope herself sat at the shiny rolltop desk. But other times, other manners! The files were still there in an orderly row; the pigeonholes, not quite so full, still held memoranda, neatly docketed; the depressing print still hung on the walls. All was as it had been in her father's time—and yet with a difference.

Faint odors—the odors of cigarettes and perfume—were in the air. But Penelope, be it understood, was not responsible for either the cigarettes or the perfume. Nor was the long glove hers that had fallen behind the chair, nor the French novel, impudently squatted on one of the files.

Penelope threw wide open the window. She gathered up the glove and the yellow-backed novel, and gingerly deposited them on a chair in the hall. She seated herself to bring order out of chaos—the chaos, once more, resulting not from any carelessness of Penelope.

Her problem was a very familiar one, but not less easily solved for that.

Given an income of twenty thousand dollars per annum, and an expenditure of something over ten thousand in five months—how much of the income, if the expenditure is not curtailed, will remain at the end of the twelfth month? Once more, the problem and the income were not Penelope's.

Something must be done. The brakes must be set. The cries and protests of her spendthrift stepmother must be sternly unheeded. Oh, this childish impecuniosity! It already justified the foresight of the late Thomas Yard.

In one bulky package, neatly labeled and bound with its elastic band, were bills for luxuries surreptitiously contracted for previous to the death of the late Thomas. In another file, held in subjection by a slab of alabaster, were bills for more wanton luxuries indulged

in during the past few months. How to curtail this reckless extravagance—that was the problem.

And a difficult problem! For can one exercise suasion, moral or legal, over a butterfly? Can one reason with a butterfly? Certainly Penelope could not pin this butterfly down to a sober realization that there are only one hundred cents in a dollar, and not one hundred and one or one hundred and ninety-nine.

"And when he asked for information,

I referred him to Penelope.

When he said, 'Mam, what's your station?'

I referred him to Penelope!"

This refrain, blithely trilled, gradually sounded crescendo and then fortissimo molto, as the door of Penelope's sanctum was thrown open unceremoniously, and Fanny radiant, novel and glove in hand, regarded her troubled trustee.

Penelope's eyes were gray. They could look at you with the appealing wistfulness and trust of a child—if you were not so unfortunate as to be a man. If you were, however, and especially a young man, they had inscrutable depths, a cold hauteur that disconcerted you, indeed—because the mouth was so tender, so obviously made to be kissed. The reddish brown hair was shot through with tints of fire. And that, too, disconcerted you, because it was dressed with so forbidding an ugliness, and because she so clearly despised its beauty. You are quite sure that she could move with the swift grace of a woodland goddess. The smooth limbs were fashioned to run, to leap, to dance, in heedless ecstasy. And yet she walked sedately—almost with the slow, dragging step of middle age. And she was only twenty-two! Alas, Penelope was a scorner of men. She was a suffragette.

And Fanny? No suffragette was Fanny. Certainly she was not beautiful; jealous women have been known to declare that she was not even pretty, but no man ever did, which is much more important. The tilted chin, the upturned nose, a freckle or two on either cheek, the eyes, very bright and undeniably green in color, the sheer alertness of the little creature had something of the air of an impertinent robin, pecking

at strawberries before your very eyes, its head cocked sidewise, defiant and mocking.

Both wore mourning, but with how different an air!

Penelope's ready made dress—wrinkled, hideous and already rusty-looking—seemed deliberately to set its wearer apart from a merry and laughing world. The somber black had an austerity as forbidding as that of a danger sign. It seemed a warning to rash man that trespassers and poachers on this property would be prosecuted to the utmost rigor of the law.

But Fanny's frock—conventional black, to be sure—did not frighten at all. If it told its tale, it was a tale twice told. It spoke of the past, but it hinted coquettishly at the future.

"Ah, dear guardian, tender and true—bookkeeper, philosopher and stepdaughter—art busy as usual?"

"Yes, mamma, very busy."

"Struggling with the enormities of your spendthrift stepmother, I suppose? Well, I want to chat with you. Or is 'confer' the more dignified word?"

Penelope swung around in her swivel chair, a pencil at her lips.

"Well, mamma—"

"Please, Miss Trustee, I have seen the dearest love of a mare. She took a red at the Garden in the combination class. She is too sweet! You should have seen her prick her ears to and fro as she trotted round the ring. And such action—so beautifully balanced! And please, Miss Trustee, I must have her."

Penelope did not answer. Her interest seemed to be concentrated in balancing her lead pencil on her forefinger. Fanny glanced askance at her from her almond-shaped green eyes. This sphinxlike silence on the part of her trustee was disconcerting. She whistled to gain courage for the next plunge. In for a penny, in for a pound! And that was Fanny's conduct of life—her rule—if she had any.

"Then, Penelope, when Billy and I had settled on the mare—"

"Settled on the mare!" The pencil clattered to the floor.

"When we had settled on the mare,"

repeated Fanny firmly, "we dropped in at Weatherby and Hankinson's—the carriage makers."

Penelope stooped for the pencil, and again patiently poised it on her forefinger. Fanny gazed at the pencil, fascinated. It wobbled suspiciously, and that told the tale of her guardian's mood. She was going to make a fuss again, of course.

"After a lot of squabbling we decided on a basket phaeton. Billy insisted that I ought to get a pony for the phaeton, but—"

Penelope's gray eyes glittered. Fanny hastened to assure her.

"But I said: 'No; I will *not* be extravagant.' Oh, I was very firm, and at last Billy conceded grumblingly that if the groom on the rumble behind was smart, and rather undersized, the turn-out might do at a pinch."

"So, mamma," said Penelope sweetly, "you have bought a horse and a phaeton?"

"Yes; and hired the groom," said Fanny defiantly.

"Quite a busy morning, mamma."

Fanny wriggled in her seat. Really, Penelope was sometimes too like her father—the same calm before the storm.

"Of course I couldn't use the phaeton in town, so as we walked up the Avenue together we stopped at Beverly Locke's and—"

"Horse dealer or carriage maker?" inquired Penelope.

"He makes a specialty of country property. You ought to know that," said Fanny crossly.

Silence—a deep silence to be felt.

"He suggested Newport. But I wouldn't think of it. I was so careful not to be foolish," pleaded Fanny.

Still Penelope listened in stubborn silence.

"And after a lot of fussing—house hunting is such strenuous work—we decided on a cozy little box in Bedminster. Poor Thomas and I stopped there for a night on our wedding journey. So naturally I was attracted to the place—sentimental memories, you know."

Fanny sighed, but Penelope's mouth was still firmly relentless.

"I always doted on Bedminster," continued Fanny, after a painful pause. "It's a dull little hole, rather, but *so* respectable, and near enough to Brad-dox for one not quite to vegetate."

"Am I to understand, mamma, that you have actually *rented* this cozy little box in this dull little hole?"

"I have, and paid two months' rent in advance—the customary formality, I think. Thomas always used to say that when one found a thing one liked it was stupid to fuss further."

Penelope drew a pad toward her and poised her pencil.

"How much did the horse cost?"

"Oh, it was absurdly cheap. Billy said he *never*—"

"How much, mamma?"

"Seven hundred about. I'm not quite sure."

Penelope sniffed, and scribbled the figures on her pad.

"You paid for him?"

"It was a *her*, Penelope—a mare, I said."

"You paid for *it*, then?"

"Oh, I suppose he will send in the bill."

"And the buggy?"

"*Buggy!* Farmers drive buggies, child. A phaeton, I said."

"And the price?"

"It simply didn't occur to me to ask. How vulgarly commercial you are!" Fanny tilted her chin.

"And the coachman?"

"Oh, I didn't buy *him*," retorted Fanny cheerfully. "His wages, if that is what you mean, are to be forty dollars a month and lodging—over the stables."

"You haven't mentioned the trifle of livery," suggested Penelope.

"Nor, if you insist upon being precise, saddles, harness, blankets and all the stable things. Is there anything else you wish to find fault with? And I don't think it is nice of you, Penelope, to catechise and grumble and make me unhappy. Why, I am sure poor Thomas never intended that you should nag and criticize every time I spend five cents for fare on a street car."

"Don't resort to tears, mamma, please," said Penelope cruelly—"at

least until you have told me the rent of this cozy little box in Braddox."

"Exasperating child! Bedminster, I said. And the rent? I *think* two thousand for the season. It was a tiny little place, and I think one gardener can take care of the grounds."

Penelope was adding up very carefully the row of figures she had written on her pad. Penelope was not strong in mathematics, and she was resorting to the subterfuge of fingers—under the desk. Fanny caught her at that and laughed rudely.

"Seven hundred for the horse, and if we count another two hundred and fifty for the buggy—"

"Two hundred and fifty, silly! A thousand would be nearer the price."

"One thousand, seven hundred for the horse and carriage, plus one hundred and sixty-six dollars—all charged. May I ask, mamma, when you expect to pay these bills?"

"Oh, next month," replied Fanny flippantly, examining her well shaped nails, "or the month after that, or the month after that."

"I am afraid that statistics weary you, but—"

"Awfully, most awfully."

"But sometimes they are necessary. Your net income—"

"I don't know what 'net' means. Why don't you call it 'neat' and be done with it?"

"Your net income," continued Penelope with exasperating good nature, "that is, your income after deducting expenses—"

"Expenses?"

"The expenses of administration—taxes, lawyers' fees, commissions—"

"Who gets the commissions?" demanded Fanny suspiciously.

Penelope flushed. "The law, mamma, allows the executors one per cent of all moneys paid to beneficiaries on sums over eleven thousand."

"One cent in a hundred! What a very little bit! Do you think it really worth while to make me so uncomfortable for just a few cents?"

"My own commissions," replied Penelope with dignity, "I shall *not* collect."

"So you make me wretched purely as a labor of love! Dear Guardian, you are too generous."

"Mamma, I want you to pay very careful attention to what I am saying. Please don't interrupt again. I was about to say that your net income this year is twenty thousand dollars. But after the payment of the bills which you contracted for before father's death, and for the bills that you are so recklessly incurring now, it will certainly be reduced to less than—"

"Surely, Penelope, you are not finding fault with me for paying my bills! And I will *not* be lectured to in this dictatorial manner. It is not fitting. It is not—not filial."

"So, during the remainder of the year, you will not be able to count on much more than twelve hundred dollars a month," continued Penelope calmly.

"Oh, that's plenty, plenty."

"I hope you will find it so. Mr. Harmon and I think it wise to pay this income in the future in monthly installments; and I have decided, mamma, that I can't conscientiously let you borrow any more money from me."

"Oh, very well," said Fanny loftily.

She struck a match angrily on the sole of her boot and lighted a cigarette. "I am sure I have listened to you, Penelope, very patiently. I have endured the humiliation of your prying into my personal affairs—"

"I am only doing my duty. It is for your good, mamma."

But Fanny was too angry to weigh her words.

"I could have had a lot of money right away, just by signing a paper. But I trusted old Harmon and you—"

Penelope's gray eyes flashed.

"I explained to you, and so did Mr. Harmon, that father's will made it necessary for you to sign away your dower rights—"

"And my liberty," cried Fanny on the verge of tears. "Don't forget that, Penelope."

"If you had insisted on your dower rights, you would have had less than a third of your present income. It is unkind of you to blame me now."

"Well, I am not sure that I didn't make a mistake," said Fanny defiantly. "And I am not *sure* that it isn't wiser to have a bird in the hand rather than two in a bush. My money would be my own, then, at any rate. Besides, if I wanted to marry, I could."

"You should have thought of that before. The law won't let you do it now."

"Oh, bother the law! You're always throwing the law in my face. The law! The law!"

"I don't mind your blaming the law," said Penelope wistfully, "but please don't blame me. I am only the instrument of the law."

"Thomas knew I never could tell him what I thought of it all. That's what makes me fret so. I can rage and rage, but I never can have the only privilege that a woman always has; I never can have the last word—I never can answer back."

"But money burns such a big, big hole in your pocket, and it will end—"

Fanny held her stepdaughter at arm's length, and looked at her solemnly, nodding her head.

"It will end, Penelope—for, mark my words, it *will* end, this absurd situation—can't you *guess* how it will end?"

"By—by your marrying again?" asked Penelope very anxiously. "Yes, I've been afraid of that. But oh, do be careful. Don't jump out of the frying pan into the fiery furnace. Won't the bonds of matrimony gall and hurt, just as much with a mere man as with me? When you talk of marrying again, you frighten me, because—"

"You would have to approve of the mere man, wouldn't you, sober face?"

"Yes," said Penelope, in a low voice.

"And that tender conscience of yours won't let you approve lightly of any mere man?"

"I should want him to be a nice man," said Penelope decidedly.

"You'll try to force a man on me?" said Fanny. "An old man—a bald man—a stingy man."

"It is not my place to pick him out," said Penelope with dignity. "But I should expect him to be wise and prudent, mamma."

"Wise and prudent! The adjectives sound deally." Fanny gazed lugubriously at her guardian. "But, there, I am not going to marry—at least, not for ages. We won't make ourselves unhappy by crossing bridges before we come to them. And if I do marry again, the mere man will be the kindest, dearest, sunniest one in the wide world."

"They are very rare. What is your ideal?" asked Penelope wistfully.

Fanny clasped her hands, her eyes looking right through the "Deathbed of Lincoln" to a rosy vision of married bliss.

"I should like him to have charm, and be just a *little* gay—just enough to make him interesting. I don't mind very much if he isn't good-looking. Distinction is much better than good looks."

"You don't mean fast, I hope?" asked anxious Penelope.

Fanny's deliberation was delicious.

"Fast? Oh, of course not. But I shouldn't mind a peccadillo or two, should you?"

"A peccadillo!" Penelope's face lengthened.

"Peccadillo, precious, means just a little bit of a sin—a slight trespass or offense. Just a harmless little sin. Would you disapprove of the mere man if he had just a little sin?"

"I am afraid I should," said Penelope dolefully.

"You are very hard to please," said Fanny, with a sigh.

III

It had rained the night before, and there had been a cold, blustering wind. But this morning a gentle breeze from southern lands and sunny seas caressed Fanny's cheek. She opened her eyes slowly, blinking at the bright sunshine, her hands locked behind her tumbled hair. Today, like all other days, she felt a thrill of excitement as if adventures were surely to happen.

Later, when her hansom bowed smartly up the Avenue toward the Park, she leaned forward, looking this way and

that like a happy child, and never had her freedom seemed more dear.

To do what she liked, to go where she wished—how delicious! No one to nag, except Penelope, who really only amused her.

Not one cloud was on the horizon, unless it was that she had rented the house in Bedminster. Bedminster, after all, was an unknown quantity. Why had she not gone abroad, drifting aimlessly about through France or Italy?

However, she was committed to Bedminster. She had pocketed the retainer, so to speak, that settled her there. For Penelope had insisted on paying not only the rent of the house at Bedminster but the expenses for running it as well. If Fanny had protested, it was very faintly. Her exchequer was low. Perhaps Penelope guessed that.

At the Fifty-ninth Street entrance to the Park, Joe, the groom, was waiting with her own mare and his mount.

A touch of the spur, and Fanny cantered briskly down the bridle path, Joe at a discreet distance behind her.

She had circled the reservoir twice before she drew rein. She scanned the people passing her with amused interest—the fat Jewess, bumping in her saddle, her elbow supported by the riding master, chattering children, dignified papas, rosy débutantes—very few young men, she observed sadly.

But here certainly came a young man, and his air of distinction arrested Fanny's attention at once.

His reins were thrown on the horse's neck, and he was striking match after match in a futile effort to light a cigarette. His exasperation was diverting. Fanny's dimples came into play as she passed him, taking him in slyly out of the corners of her almond-shaped eyes, but lowering them discreetly as he stared at her in open admiration.

"Impudence!" thought Fanny, but the dimple showed alluringly.

Ten minutes later she again met him, his horse poking along at a sluggish walk. How bored the poor boy did look, she thought compassionately, and what stupid things introductions were!

He looked very nice—an Englishman, she decided, and just over.

Many times they passed each other, now at a trot, now at a canter, her Englishman naively eager and admiring, Fanny discreetly encouraging.

Now her eyes were cast down. "You are not to go too far, sir," they said; "I am a timid young thing." Now her eyes were innocently and boldly wide. "You see, I can be haughty, if you dare presume, sir." And again: "I simply had to snub you last time, sir, but this dimple is to cheer you a little."

Horses, however, are not machines, wound up to circle reservoirs forever. It had been an amusing hour—a fascinating game—and Fanny had played it *con amore*. Still no prizes could be forthcoming unless she threw discretion to the wind.

She decided that the next meeting should be the last. A brilliant play of all the glances of coquetry that would leave the poor young man quite dazzled, then she would make a swift dash homeward.

But the next time her Englishman had a companion; and the gods rewarded or punished her, as you wish, by making this companion her brother, Billy Merrick. The blushes would come as guilty Fanny realized the inevitable introduction.

But Billy was priggishly selfish. Or merely tactless and stupid? At any rate, the introduction was not forthcoming. Billy greeted her with a gruff "Morning, Fanny," and trotted past without drawing rein, the Englishman reluctantly following.

Fanny jogged on serenely, smiling on a frightened urchin who dodged from under her horse's heel. A moment ago she had looked forward to an introduction with dismay. Now that Billy had denied her that, she intended to insist on it. The means? Nothing more simple.

At the right moment she dropped her crop very deliberately into the mud. When Billy and his companion rode toward her, she was gazing down at it with an appealing wistfulness. But Joe, the groom? Joe had been sent back to look for an imaginary handkerchief that he

was given to understand had been dropped out of her saddle pocket.

"I am so sorry, but I've dropped my crop," said Fanny remorsefully as the men rode up.

Now Billy was fat and gouty and extremely selfish. Or did he see through Fanny's ruse? At any rate, it was not he who picked up her whip. A kick at the stirrups, a light vault and his companion was holding up the whip to her, having carefully wiped it with his handkerchief.

"How good of you!" Fanny said, rewarding him with a smile. "But your handkerchief!"

"Awfully glad to be of service, I'm sure." He gathered up his reins and transfixed Billy with a significant glare.

Billy's florid face, round and expressionless as a harvest moon, relaxed into a grin. His blue eyes had the light of mischief in them.

"Fanny, I want you to meet my friend, Sir Walter Raleigh," he said stolidly.

"Don't be a silly, Billy?" said Fanny good-naturedly.

"The happy-hearted Mr. Merrick is in a humorous mood. Introduce me, there's a good chap."

"What the deuce is it to be—Botherick or Scarlett?" asked Billy in a stage whisper.

"Botherick, of course," returned his companion fiercely.

"Well, how was I to know?" Billy assumed an aggrieved air. "These aliases of yours are confusing." Then aloud: "Fanny, I want you to know my friend, Mr. Scarlett. My sister, Mrs. Yard, Mr. Scarlett. Oh, the devil!"

Billy gazed helplessly at his companion, contrition and dismay written large on his round countenance. Mr. Scarlett's countenance, however, assumed a deep, rich copper hue.

"Mr. Merrick's ideas of humor are peculiar. My name is Botherick, of course—"

"But on the Grampian Hills," chuckled Billy—"I should say, in the wilds of New York—I am masquerading as—"

"Your mysterious joke, Billy," said his sister severely, "may be excruciat-

ingly funny, but I don't think it can be a nice one." She turned to his companion.

"Lord Algernon Botherick, I suppose?"

"Ah, you read the papers, I see," said Billy with satisfaction.

"Sometimes," acknowledged Fanny innocently. "Why?"

"Merrick!" implored the unhappy Lord Botherick. "I am sure Mrs. Yard never reads the 'yellows.'"

"Oh, never," said Fanny primly. "Have you been long in America, Lord Botherick?"

"I came over on the *Asiatic* last week, Mrs. Yard."

"And are you to be in New York long?"

"If the reporters don't make it too hot for him," said Billy wickedly.

"Not in New York, I'm afraid," answered Lord Botherick, directing a savage kick at Billy's shinbone.

"Like most Englishmen, have you come to America to go after big game?" asked Fanny. "America is the happy hunting ground for Englishmen, isn't it?"

"Say, rather, America is the haven of refuge for perturbed and guilty souls." Billy shook his head solemnly.

"Perhaps I should have said 'fair game,' instead of 'big game,' Lord Botherick."

"Oh, I assure you not," he answered, with quite unnecessary warmth, Fanny thought.

"The burnt child dreads the fire," commented Billy, shaking his head.

"You think the sport would be dangerous?" said Fanny.

"Diana has been known to avenge herself if the hunter is too bold," he answered.

"In the law courts," added Billy, exploding. "Come, Fan, don't be a little hypocrite. Confess that you have read the sad and sorrowful history of Lord Botherick's misadventures."

"They seem vaguely familiar." She looked at him curiously. "Did the misadventures take place in London or New York?"

"Oh, it is a tale of two cities," cried Billy rapturously. "The opening numbers of the serial begin in wicked old Lon-

don. They are continued in our chaste city, and they are to be concluded—heaven knows where."

"Oh, now I remember," cried Fanny, blushing. "A very naughty tale, too shocking to be amusing. He trifled lightly with a woman's heart in London town, didn't he? But she wouldn't trifle. How inconsiderate of her! She screamed for her rights, as she called them. And the trifter fled. So, Lord Botherick, you scurried across seas to lose yourself under the alias of Mr. Scarlett. Oh, cowardly trifter!"

The cowardly trifter flicked a fly viciously from his horse's shoulder.

"It wasn't nearly as bad as the 'yellows' made out," he pleaded.

"I should hope not, indeed," said Fanny, tossing her head. "In face of the papers, I could forgive the—the—peccadillo. But the alias—that is too ridiculous."

"I know it," he acknowledged sheepishly. "I was a frightful duffer; but the temptation was great, Mrs. Yard. I suppose I ought not to have turned tail, either. But I couldn't stand the chaff of the fellows at the club, and the wagging tongues of dowagers at teas and garden parties. Then on the *Asiatic* not a soul recognized me—and my family name is Scarlett, you know. At quarantine the reporter chaps came swarming over the side like blood-thirsty rats. I didn't see why I should be plagued by the vermin, and they hunted for Lord Botherick in vain. And now in New York the name of Scarlett, dear lady, is as good as any other for my enemies."

"So you are Lord Botherick to your friends, and Mr. Scarlett to your enemies. And to your acquaintances?"

"Yes, by Jove," said Billy, wagging his head, "you will have to cook up a new alias for your acquaintances, Algy."

"Don't intend to make any acquaintances in New York," said Algy, looking at Fanny boldly.

"Hi, hi, hi!" cried Billy suspiciously. "See here, have you two people met before?"

"Of course not," said Fanny, blushing.

"Then"—Billy nodded his head sagely—"you have been carrying on somewhere."

"Carrying on!" Fanny leaned forward and disentangled her curb rein from the snaffle. "How vulgar you are, Billy!"

"Disgustingly vulgar," assented Algy with great heartiness. "And you'll keep my secret, Mrs. Yard?"

"Cross my heart," promised Fanny.

"And you won't even tell your husband?"

"She is a wicked widdy woman," volunteered Billy.

"Really?"

Did Fanny only imagine it, or did he look at her with deepened interest?

"I don't like the way you two have met a little bit," said Billy discontentedly. "There's something mighty queer to me about your actions. It was a neat dodge of yours, Fan, that whip dropping act, but it didn't fool me. You'd better look out, Algy, when a woman shows such depths of guile—well, don't blame me for introducing you, that's all."

"Lord Botherick has had a great deal of experience and can take care of himself, I imagine."

"Maybe—maybe," said Billy gloomily. "But what about you, you innocent young thing? You've seen me probe into this man's past, Fan, and you've seen him writhe. There he is—self-confessed villain. Don't say I didn't warn you."

"Bally old idiot! Do shut up, there's a good fellow. Do you ride in the Park often at this hour, Mrs. Yard?"

"I am going to Bedminster tomorrow, Lord Botherick."

"Jolly little place, Bedminster, I hear," was his sole comment.

Their horses had been walking slowly toward the Fifty-ninth Street entrance. Fanny beckoned to Joe, who hastened to assist her in dismounting. Rather to her surprise, Algy appeared quite willing to let the flirtation drop. Even Billy wondered.

"Haven't you had enough exercise this morning?" he demanded of Algy.

"Plenty, thanks, but I got my mount at a place on the other side of the Park."

"See you this evening. You are to dine with me, remember."

"Righto! Good morning, Mrs. Yard. A charming ride."

He wheeled his horse and rode up the bridle path at a hand gallop. Billy, meanwhile, had clambered cumbrously out of the saddle. He turned his horse over to one of the grooms of the riding club and hailed a taxicab for Fanny. Now, as they waited for it to drive up, he regarded her thoughtfully.

"Too bad you go to Bedminster tomorrow, isn't it?"

"Everybody worth knowing has gone to the country," said Fanny crossly. "What possible reason could I have for wishing to remain in New York?"

"I wonder?" said Billy solemnly. "Will you give me a lift?"

"You don't deserve it. Sometimes, Billy, you are just an impertinent boy."

"But you are going to give me a lift," said Billy, seating himself beside her, "because you want to pump me about Algy."

She leaned forward to straighten her derby before the little glass.

"Is he really so wicked as you pretend?"

"Wicked! Piffle! One of the best, and mighty decent to me when I was over last time."

"I don't think his affair much to his credit," said Fanny thoughtfully.

"Again, piffle! Case of an exaggerated sense of honor. Algy is a guileless infant, and the woman was a scheming minx. You know the sort—the usual gaiety girl. The only serious side of the affair is its comedy. It made him the laughing stock of London because—"

"Oh, I don't care for the details, Billy. And no doubt he richly deserved to be laughed at."

"Algy could have stood the chaffing. For a Britisher he can see a joke fairly well. But his constituents couldn't. You see, he was going to stand for Parliament."

"Here we are at your club; shall I drop you?"

"Thanks." Billy alighted and held out his hand. "So you go to Bedminster tomorrow?"

"I expect to."

"And that precious stepdaughter of yours—I hope she chaperons you."

"Penelope is taking life seriously just at present. She is reading law in old Harmon's office."

"Are you keeping the town house open?"

"No; Penelope thinks it is a needless expense. She is staying at the Martha Washington. But I hope she will come to Bedminster for week ends."

"The Spinsters' Retreat! Good Lord! If Penelope isn't with you, you'll be getting into mischief up there in Bedminster."

"Pooh! Bedminster has few temptations, I imagine."

"You will. And look here, Fan: you have had one secret this morning; can you keep another? Or is that impossible for a woman?"

"I can keep a secret as well as you can, it seems," said Fanny laughingly.

"Oh, it isn't a secret as far as I'm concerned. Besides, I've a special reason for telling you."

"Do hurry then or I shall be late for lunch."

"It's a tip rather than a secret, after all. Old Bother is tied to his mother's apron strings."

"Is that your secret? It doesn't interest me. And do the apron strings stretch across the Atlantic?"

"You bet they do. Old Lady Botherick, his mother, parted with her precious boy reluctantly enough, I can tell you. Algy may have a good and kind heart, but it's damned impressionable; and when a pretty woman sets a trap for him—"

"Are you hinting that I intend to set a trap for Lord Botherick?" demanded Fanny, looking at her brother very steadily.

"Oh, dear, no. I thought the joke might amuse you." Billy brushed a splash of mud from his coat sleeve. "Old Lady Botherick couldn't prevent his coming to America, of course. Horses can't budge Botherick when once he has made up his mind. His mother knew she couldn't protect him from the title hunting débutantes in America. But

she tied his hands by making him promise that no matter how desperately he might fall in love, he would not propose until he had returned to England and told her."

"A preposterous promise!"

"It depends on the point of view, my dear. Yours is naturally different from old Lady Botherick's. I think the old lady made a mighty shrewd bargain with her Algy."

"If her Algy were a boy at Oxford, perhaps."

"Ah, but remember the susceptibility of her boy. Say that he does fall in love with Exhibit A, and impetuously takes passage for England to tell mamma, don't you see that he will have almost a week on shipboard to cool his heels?"

"Then he must be weak and contemptibly fickle," asserted Fanny impatiently.

"We'll grant that," said Billy. "And, during that week on shipboard, say that Exhibit B cuts in and weans the allegiances of our Algy from Exhibit A!"

"How is this foolish surmise of the remotest interest to me? Dear Billy, do get out and let me go home to lunch. Penelope will be wondering."

"You can never tell when a little information comes in handy," said Billy carelessly. "Good-bye, Fanny. A pleasant summer if I don't see you before you leave."

He lowered one foot to the pavement and gave Fanny's address to the chauffeur. But before the man could pull his lever, Billy thrust his head in the window.

"Oh, by the way, Fanny, if fate ever destines you to be Exhibit A, look out for Exhibit B. Ta, ta!"

IV

The Knoll,
Bedminster.

DEAR PENELOPE:

It is *too* beautiful—and oh, why are you not here? I am writing from the veranda. My little house is perfect—all the real estate man claimed it to be and more. My sitting room is in cretonne—a watered paper with a border of

wreathed roses, to match the cretonne. So feminine, dear, and so Watteauesque—a delightful little nook for flirtations. But I have had none—yet. Then there is a cozy paneled dining room opening on the veranda, and a library done in red, and hosts of books, but mostly dry ones, and a wonderful old four-poster in my bedroom.

I can just see the river's bend flashing in the sun down in the valley; and beyond green meadows, dotted with splendid elms, broods Lion Mountain—a very tame and woolly beastie, with its broad back thickly wooded right up to the sky line.

And, Penelope, my garden, my rose garden! And its tiny pool, with the little fan-tailed Japanese gold fishes wriggling about in ecstasy! They came this morning. Thank you so much for sending them; and the poor dears are so happy, released from the stuffy tin can.

William, the gardener, is poking about among his precious roses—nipping and tying and fussing to his heart's content; and smoking such atrocious tobacco that I am driven to my second cigarette. His name is William, but it ought to be Abe—Abe Lincoln. He is a cadaverous creature, all bent-out rheumatic legs, and all bent-over rheumatic back, and two deep dimples—like mine and Abe Lincoln's—on each leathery cheek, and the deepest, kindest eyes, and the bushiest eyebrows you ever saw. And I can hear Joe shrilly whistling "Waiting at the Church," down at the stables. Joe adores me, and turns out the horses beautifully. (*Did I tell you that Billy sent up a mate for the mare? It was impertinent of him to plunge me into that expense, but I really did need another horse.*) And the maids are bustling cheerfully about. So you see we are all happy.

I am to have a dinner tonight—*à deux*. Yes, love, a man; but he is over sixty, so don't worry. He is an artist, and had a little exhibition of his pictures in the village. I bought one of them—a sweet thing—just a glimpse of this entrancing river, with the willows arched overhead and the sunshine flickering through. He is a bachelor, fat and gouty, and he

has weepy eyes. But he is so witty and naughty!

You see, I am not going to be at all lonely, though I miss you so much. The people here seem very nice, but they aren't wild about strangers, I fancy, as only a few of them have called so far. However, a week is a short time, and we shall see. It seems so strange not to be in touch with people more. But most of Thomas's acquaintances were commercial people, and Bedminster prides itself that the community is made up mostly of artists and literary gents.

It affects to despise Braddox—it affects to—but one is always meeting Bedminsterites motoring or driving on the road that leads to Braddox. I think the Bedminsterites like to bask in the expanse of the Braddox multi-millionaires' smiles, in spite of their boasted simplicity. For the golden calf of Wall Street is set up in the village street of Braddox, and the Braddox people genuflect to it as the backsliding Israelites did of old.

As you know, there are quite a lot of women in Braddox with whom I am acquainted more or less. I suppose they will call when they find out I am here, and when they aren't bridging or lunching or garden-partying. One has already—that old Mrs. Loudon. You remember her; she wears a wig as yellow as the tassels on the corn; and there are three little corn tassels—curls, I mean—dangling behind, one at each fat ear—that's not a pun—and one prudishly nestles in the nape of her red neck. She has asked me to lunch and bridge tomorrow, and I am going.

Dearest, don't worry your wise head about me. I am all right, really, and so prudent. There is lots and lots of money in the bank. The teller smiled quite sweetly this morning when I drew out some—so be comforted.

Don't dim those gray dove's eyes of yours working too hard over stuffy law books. I could shake you until your firm white teeth rattled out of their gums—you obstinate child. Some day—when it is too late, and your complexion is gone (or made up) and the wrinkles have come—real wrinkles that time

pencils ruthlessly at tragic thirty (not professional wrinkles of worry that you assume when you feel it your duty, sweet guardian, to lecture your wayward ward)—*some day*, wicked girl, you will wail over the wasted opportunities, and the wasted men. Then all the disdainful men will turn up their noses at you, and it will serve you right.

How dare you hesitate about coming up on Friday? You *must* come, and I shall wrestle with you as Jacob did with the angels. Only you aren't an angel. You are a blue stocking. And the stockings are hideously striped all around. I despair of you quite that you should prefer such hideous hosiery to openwork ones, with loves embroidered on the instep. I speak in figures, but you'll catch the drift.

Your wayward, but loving ward,

FANNY.

P. S.—Did you know—I didn't until she told me—that Mrs. Loudon has a sister who married an Englishman? (The husband is dead, by the way.)

P. P. S.—And that there is a son? And that he is expected to visit his aunt at Braddox?

V

The Knoll,
Bedminster.

DEAR BILLY:

You old fraud! You *knew* he was going to be at Braddox all the time. But you remembered it's sixty miles from Schenectady to Troy, and you counted on the enticing Trojan—feminine gender, namely Helen, or otherwise me—being too far from her Paris to get him into mischief.

But man proposes (that's you) and God disposes. Yes, my dear Billy, he has come; I have seen him; and who is to conquer? I should love to bring him to my feet, if only to punish you for the impertinent advice you gave me the last time I saw you. But this Helen is quite as crafty as the other Helen. She doesn't intend to lay her cards on the table for her enemies to read.

And yet I am almost tempted to do that. I feel myself such a tower of strength that I dare to defy Jupiter and

all his thunderbolts. (If the last words are wabbly and difficult to read, it is because I am giggling at the picture of fat you, with your china blue eyes and baby stare, posing as sublime Jupiter, one foot on a woolly cloud, the other neatly tucked under the throne.)

It is so difficult to decide. I think I will just express my contempt of you and your threats, and be a gorgeous peacock, and spread my beautiful feathers in haughty disdain. In other words, my brother, I am so conscious of the potency of my charms that I think I can afford to show you my cards and still win the game—if I decide it's worth the winning. Supposing I give you a comfortable seat in the grandstand? Now, sir, are you seated? Can you see the circus? Then hiss or applaud, as the spirit moves you.

First of all, then, I have opened my campaign. It was just like a game of chess. The conventional move, I believe, is to put forward your pawn, two squares in front of the king—or is it the queen? That makes an opening for the queen to swoop across the board and gobble up her prey, if she is lucky enough to catch it.

The pawn, dear Billy, was old Mrs. Loudon. She drove over from Braddox to call the other day. I entertained her so vastly that she invited me to Braddox for a little bridge. Behold me, then, the queen, swooping down the road to Braddox to catch and subdue my prey, the notorious Lord Botherick, *alias* the cowardly Mr. Scarlett. But, frankly, I hadn't the remotest idea at that time that our Algy was Mrs. Loudon's nephew, and the surprise was the more startling and enjoyable.

It was when I was dummy that I saw him first. No one had offered me a cigarette. Old Mrs. Loudon is very prim in her ideas of propriety, as you know. But I had caught sight of a box on a table near the open French window, and had been wondering who smoked. So I stole one neatly. I had made my way to the terrace for a breath of air, and had inhaled the first delicious puff, when, to my complete surprise, he popped up.

"Hel-lo!" was his ceremonious greeting—a good deal of emphasis on the first syllable, and a rising inflection on the second—you know the trick.

"How do you do, Lord Botherick?" I said very pleasantly, but rather coolly, too. For if he thought that he could flirt with me idly whenever he was bored, I intended to disillusion him.

"What a lark finding you here!" he cried delightedly, holding my hand longer than I thought quite necessary.

"Oh, the world is very small," I replied indifferently. "One runs into all sorts of people everywhere."

"Then you didn't come out here to look for me?" he asked, trying to be facetious, but only being impertinent.

"Did you?" I asked boldly.

"Of course I did," replied Algy—a manifest lie, dear Billy. "And I say, don't you want to see the garden! It's a jolly little garden, and nobody will be about."

I stared at him with that steady, squelching look, supposed to be *de rigueur* with ruffled heroines. Then I turned from him in dignified silence to rejoin my partner at the bridge table. (This maneuver was intended to leave him crushed. I am humiliated to confess, however, that I was pursued by a laugh.)

"My dear, you kept us waiting," expostulated Mrs. Loudon mildly. "I have made it hearts."

"May I play to hearts?" asked my partner rather coldly. (She is really quite charming, but I think she had seen Lord Botherick with me, and I *think* she has designs on him herself.)

"I double hearts," I cried recklessly, before I had scarcely sorted my cards.

You see, it amused me to imagine it a kind of duel between old Lady Botherick (Mrs. Loudon being her proxy, merely) and myself. Were the powers to win or I? Well, I *did* win—the odd fell to me. I took it for an omen and beamed.

"My, but you are a reckless adversary," said old Lady Botherick—I mean Algy's aunt—looking ruefully over the hands played. "I had five hearts—three of them honors. It wasn't according to the conventions—your double, my dear."

"When I declare war I defy the conventions," I cried gaily.

"But what erratic bridge!" murmured my partner.

My bridge was even more erratic before the butler brought in tea. It was distracting, Billy, to see his long shadow fall on the terrace as he paced to and fro outside. Especially when he saw all the others absorbed in discussing an interesting hand, and poked his head in the window and growled at me like a dog.

"You must come again," said Mrs. Loudon, as I drew on my driving gloves. (No, he had not appeared at tea, and I confess I was wondering.)

"I am not supposed to be going out," I answered; "but it's kind of you to ask me."

The fact is, Billy, if things *should* by any chance happen, I don't intend to bring on myself the reproach of having thrown myself at his head. If he chooses to come over to Bedminster, that certainly is not *my* affair.

As I drew the whip from the socket, and nodded to Joe to let Dolly and Dill have their heads, I looked about as much as I dared for a glimpse of him. Of course I was piqued when he let me drive off without even speaking to me again. I didn't think it nice of him to be so wary—as if I were a pretty parlor maid to be kissed on the sly. So I touched up the horses smartly and we tore past the shrubbery and through the gate and down the Braddox road, Joe on the rumble hanging on for dear life. Yes, if he thought *that*—

And there he was ahead, swishing his walking stick and swinging along toward Bedminster at four miles an hour.

At the beat of my horses' hoofs he looked around at me—oh, quite too innocently to deceive me. Yes, of course I drew up.

"You seem in a hurry," I said. I think I would have given him a lift.

"No; just a stroll to Bedminster," he answered lamely.

I noticed that his glance fell wistfully on the vacant seat beside me.

"To Bedminster! What walkers you Englishmen are," I answered sweetly;

"and what a lot of exercise you do need!"

I flourished my whip at him, then I drew it smartly across my horses' flanks. They sprang forward, and I called good-bye over my shoulder.

It was cutting off my own fun to spite his impertinent face. But I had to punish him; my self-respect demanded it.

There, dear Billy! You see, I have fired the opening gun. You have heard its reverberation. Perhaps you think it's only the report of a popgun. But supposing, to change the figure, it is Cupid's shaft, and he has guided my hand? There will be ructions, dear Billy, and you will be to blame, but I never could refuse a dare.

Defiantly yours,
FANNY.

VI

THAT evening Fanny was dawdling over her coffee on the veranda, wondering whether it really ever paid to be virtuous, when the doorbell rang—a determined and insistent ring.

She supposed it to be a telegram or something disagreeable, and was quite sure of that when the maid appeared, her stupid face utterly awestricken. Only when she read the engraved card on the salver was she reassured.

It was Lord Botherick.

It was an unconventional hour to call, certainly, but he was quite as much at his ease and as coolly matter-of-fact as if it were the customary thing for gentlemen to stroll over casually from Braddox to call on ladies at Bedminster after dinner in their morning clothes.

"Where in the world have you dropped from?" was Fanny's rather ungracious greeting.

"Oh, from Braddox," he answered calmly, crossing his legs. "I told you I was coming. May I smoke?"

"Then you actually walked, after all?" demanded Fanny, glancing at his shoes.

"I did—if for no other reason than to show that I keep my word, Mrs. Yard."

"What bravado!" said Fanny dis-

daintily. "And I hope you haven't come to dinner, because you will fare rather badly."

"Dined at the Blue Lion, thanks."

He selected carefully the most comfortable chair.

"Charming view you have here, and a jolly little place. But do you live all alone, Mrs. Yard?"

"Only adventuresses are supposed to live alone," said Fanny severely. "I have a daughter. Perhaps you didn't know that?"

No, Algy had not bargained on the daughter.

"Little beggar is tucked away in bed, I suppose."

"I doubt it," answered Fanny serenely, lighting a cigarette. "She rarely goes to bed before eleven."

"What extraordinary customs you Americans have!" he exclaimed, bewildered. "I say, you know, isn't it rather bad for a youngster to keep such late hours?"

"Perhaps," answered Fanny indifferently. "But then, you see, my daughter is rather a student. She is quite absorbed in Blackstone now."

"Pardon me, you mean Black, the novelist fellow, of course."

"I said Blackstone, the lawyer," corrected Fanny with asperity.

"But—but what an extraordinarily precocious child!"

"She took her B.A. at Bryn Mawr last spring," Fanny blew a ring of smoke toward the ceiling.

Algy positively sprang from his chair.

"'Pon my word, Mrs. Yard, I won't insult you by asking you your age, but—"

"Oh, I don't mind telling you at all. I am not quite twenty-four."

"And this precocious child of yours has taken a degree at college? Oh, I say, Mrs. Yard, I believe you are making fun of me."

"Penelope is twenty-two. But she happens to be my stepdaughter," Fanny glanced at the clock. "And do you intend to tramp all the way back to Brad-dox tonight?"

"You aren't sending me away already?"

Please be gracious, and I will try hard not to bore you. No; a livery chap is to call for me in about half an hour."

"And what will mamma say, your being out so late at night?" demanded Fanny wickedly.

"Lady Botherick is in England," replied Algy comfortably.

"And while the cat's away the mice will play, Lord Botherick?"

"I say, you know, is it quite the thing for you to call my mother a cat?"

"It was extremely rude. What I should have said was, if she is so domineering, do you find it nice to cut the apron strings?"

"Really, you talk in such riddles." Algy flushed uncomfortably.

She was not, however, to be put off by his assumed dullness. It amused her to play with her victim.

"Suppose I translate the riddle freely. Will not Lady Botherick be shocked—even a little anxious—when Mrs. Loudon writes to her that the son and heir to the Botherick estates has tramped six dusty miles to call on a frivolous widow?"

"It is none of my aunt's confounded business," said Algy stoutly.

But Fanny's Parthian shot had told. The unhappy victim was squirming in his chair.

"Ah, then you acknowledge that Lady Botherick will be anxious?"

It was Algy's turn to glance at the clock.

"I'm afraid I am staying awfully late," he said.

Fanny touched the bell.

"Jane, please tell me when Lord Botherick's carriage arrives."

She took up the cudgels again.

"I should be ashamed to do anything my mother disapproved of," said Fanny severely.

"By Jove, Mrs. Yard, what a frightful tease you are!"

"But wouldn't she?"

Algy relighted his cigar. "Wouldn't she—what?"

"Well then, didn't she?"

"Didn't she—what?"

"How dull you are—when it is convenient for you to be. Didn't she make

you promise that you would be very careful not to—not to—”

But Fanny's courage faltered, now that she had come to the point.

“Not to—what?” asked Algy, with the calmness of despair.

“Not to jump out of the frying pan into the fire,” said Fanny desperately, half frightened at her boldness.

He looked at her steadily a moment. His annoyance was evident. She watched him with some trepidation.

“Do forgive me,” she begged. “It is my besetting sin—to say indiscreet things. You aren't angry, are you?”

“With you? Of course not. But I think it rather cheeky of Merrick to be telling tales to a—”

“Are you going to take your revenge by calling me a stranger?” asked Fanny softly.

“Of course not.” He drew his chair a trifle nearer to hers. “And as for my having promised my mother not to—to jump out of the frying pan into the fire, love will find a way, Mrs. Yard.”

It was most unfair. He had turned Fanny's glittering weapons on herself—right at her heart.

“There is your livery chap,” she cried, seizing the excuse to peer out of the window.

“And when am I to see you again?” asked Algy at her side.

“Not soon, I am afraid. Penelope is coming for the week end, and I shall be very busy showing her the sights.”

“That Infant Prodigy,” said Algy darkly, “is going to be a damper, I think.”

“She certainly disapproves of young men with pasts,” thrust Fanny.

“I would bet a pony that she's a precious humbug,” he grumbled. “Aren't you a bit in awe of her, Mrs. Yard?”

“Just a bit,” confessed Fanny.

“That's frightfully weak of you, you know. You should keep her in her place. One would think she doled out your pocket money.”

“Would they?” said Fanny with a smile. “Perhaps she does.”

“How silly! I know I shall detest that I. P.”

“Men have been known to fall in love

with her before now, Lord Botherick. But not one of them has dared to tell her so. Good night.”

VII

LORD ALGERNON BOTHERICK could scarcely be called a reflective man. In the hunting field he didn't worry much as to the nature of the take-off or whether a ditch lay in wait for him on the other side of the hedge. Ride straight, your eyes on the quarry, and hang the consequences—that was his motto. And now, as he was driven back to Braddox, his reflections, if one can dignify them as such, were of a rather scrappy nature.

“Jolly dimples! But a widow! She hasn't the earmarks of one, though. And what alluring green eyes! Steady there, Bother, old boy. Widdies are dangerous critters. 'Ware of the widdies. But what a tease she is! Oh, go to the deuce, you and your dimples!”

He lighted his pipe and tried to talk with the driver. But the driver was irresponsible. His New England I-am-as-good-as-you-are soul was not to be placated by the “My good mans” of his fare. Algy was driven back to his reflections.

“Got to be jolly well careful; that's a fact. She's fishin'—mustn't be a silly ass and take the hook. What would the mater say? No end of a row if her Algy is hooked and dangled before the mater by a saucy American widdy woman.

“But you aren't going to get hooked, are you Algy, old boy? You've nibbled at the hook before, and it hurt. Yes, my lady, whip the stream with your most seductive flies. This old trout knows a thing or two. He'll play with you, give you a run for your money, but he's not to be tempted by your gaudy fly.”

Braddox at last; and an indignant aunt, sitting up for him in the library.

“Algernon, what mischief have you been up to?”

“Felt rather stale, aunt; thought I'd stretch my legs a bit. Any mail?”

“And where did you stretch them to?” demanded Mrs. Loudon suspiciously.

"Bedminster, I think is the name of the village. Pretty place, Bedminster, aunt; nice and restful."

Mrs. Loudon looked thoughtfully at her nephew. He was pulling the ears of Zut, her French bull, and she was not sure that he was not smiling.

"You must have needed exercise badly, Algernon, to go without your dinner."

"I did. But I've dined, thanks."

"Where?"

"At an inn called the Blue Boar, or some such name."

"With whom?"

"Quite alone, aunt. Why?"

Algy gave Zut's ears a tweak and looked up at his aunt in innocent wonder. But Mrs. Loudon was quite as clever as her nephew and refused to let him off so easily.

"The Bowerings and the Jordans were at dinner. They expected to meet you."

"Awfully sorry, aunt. But it is a bore meeting people; and you mustn't forget that I am under a cloud."

"H'm! And did the sun shine on you at Bedminster?"

Algy was examining Zut's ears with interest.

"You ought to have a vet to look at this pup's ears. He's got canker in one of them."

"I am more interested in your misadventures at Bedminster than in the diseases of Zut."

"Misadventures!" He looked at his aunt reproachfully. "What in the world are you driving at?"

"Simply a discreet inquiry, Algernon, as to whether you did or did not meet anyone at Bedminster."

He reached for a cigar from the box on the mantel, lighted it and faced Mrs. Loudon. His back to the grate, his hands fiddled with his coattails, and he directed an abstracted gaze toward the ceiling.

"Well, aunt, since you are so persistent, I did."

"Who?"

"Oh, someone Billy introduced me to in New York."

"A woman, of course. Algernon, this

secretiveness of yours is most significant."

"Aunt, this curiosity of yours is appalling."

"Come, you exasperating boy, on whom did you call? Her name, sir!"

"Oh, she's respectable, aunt, don't worry. In fact, you have called on her, and she on you. It was Mrs. Yard, if you must know."

Mrs. Loudon may have been shocked at the duplicity of Fanny, but she was too wise a woman to scold.

"Poor Thomas Yard's widow! And already!" was her cryptical comment.

"Why poor? And already what?"

"She led him a dance, Algernon, and I will leave your conscience to decide what I meant by the second exclamation."

Algy yawned. "Well, he probably deserved it; and as for my conscience, it will be quite at rest when I've had a peck at something and a B. and S. It's a beastly bore, but I've got to go to town tomorrow—got to see that solicitor chap."

"About *that* woman, I suppose?" said Mrs. Loudon, eyeing her nephew severely.

"What an inquisitive old aunty it is! Are you worrying lest it be some other woman—already?"

"Provoking youth, go to your tipples and to bed. Oh, Algy, it is a great responsibility having you on my hands! If you should make a fool of yourself again Susan would never forgive me."

"No fear, aunt, no fear," said Algy serenely.

"But you have such a soft heart, dear."

"Not a soft head, I hope," he boasted. "Then there's my promise to the mater. Don't you worry, aunt, about me. I know a thing or two. Good night."

Mrs. Loudon rang for a cup of hot water, and sipped it very slowly and very deliberately. Hot water is not an exhilarating beverage, but at least it leaves the head clear. She felt the need of a clear head. The duplicity of Fanny and the susceptibility of Algy—these were a terrifying combination.

VIII

FOR more than an hour Penelope and Joshua Harmon had been closeted in his private office.

"The way you have grasped these details of business, my dear, is most gratifying. I confess I was rather skeptical as to the wisdom—or at least the necessity—of your reading law in my office. But you have justified the experiment. So we will get rid of these industrials—never liked 'em, and the market is fair now—and reinvest the proceeds in A. and W. You approve, eh?"

"Yes, Mr. Harmon," said Penelope listlessly.

Joshua Harmon locked the new tin box, on the front of which was painted in white the words, "Thomas Yard Estate," and placed it on a shelf among other tin boxes.

"So much for business." He rubbed his hands briskly. "And now, how is Fanny getting along at Bedminster?"

"She is enjoying the country very much, Mr. Harmon."

Joshua Harmon critically regarded his co-trustee.

"Don't like those heavy eyes and pale cheeks. Time I bundled you out to the country, bag and baggage. Besides, Fanny may be getting into mischief."

"I did intend to go out this week end," Penelope answered, smiling. "But on Saturday there is a meeting of the board of the New York Chapter of Suffragettes, and I am chairman. It is an important meeting."

"Tut, tut! If it were a meeting to discuss the ways and means of attracting eligible bachelors I should be more in sympathy. The fact is, my dear, you are emphasizing too much the business end of this trusteeship of yours. You are neglecting the sentimental issue."

"I am leaving that bridge until I come to it, Mr. Harmon. And I hope I shall never have to exercise the disagreeable function of censor."

"I was thinking of my law assistant—not Fanny's ineligibles."

"I will cross *that* bridge, too, when I come to it," said Penelope with a laugh.

"And when I *do* come to it, I am afraid, from what I know about the flimsy moral structure of such bridges, I shall be more sagaciously careful than the wisest old elephant."

"I wish I could throw twenty years off these bent shoulders," said Joshua Harmon roguishly. "I'd show you. By the way, speaking of flimsy moral structures reminds me: I wonder if you will do me a favor?"

"I should be very ungrateful if I would not."

Joshua Harmon unlocked a drawer of his desk, and drew out several papers of legal cap. He tapped the pages irritably.

"I have here the case of St. Clair—Mazie is the lady's name, I believe—*vs.* Botherick—Lord Algernon Botherick is the full title of the young gentleman in the case. There are certain reasons—the necessity for secrecy among others—that make it inexpedient for me to have this matter typed by the stenographer in my office. I am afraid of the reporters. They have tried already to pump my clerks. Would it be asking too much of you to run this matter off on your machine, Penelope?"

"It will be no trouble at all," said Penelope good-naturedly, gathering up the papers.

"And I am expecting a Mr. Scarlett. The clerks have all gone to lunch. Would you mind letting me know when he comes? I should like to have these papers just as soon as possible."

"I will type them at once," said Penelope, standing aside to make way for one of Joshua Harmon's most important clients.

"Miss Yard," Joshua Harmon called after her as she was leaving his private office, "I shall be engaged for five minutes. If this Mr. Scarlett comes in the meantime, kindly ask him to wait."

Penelope seated herself at the machine and glanced with some curiosity at the papers which demanded so much secrecy. As she dipped into them her lips curled contemptuously. What a sordid affair! How the race of Englishmen had degenerated! "Mazie St. Clair *vs.* Lord Botherick." Really Mr. Harmon

might have spared her this uncongenial task.

"Can I see Mr. Harmon?" asked a pleasant voice at her elbow.

"You are Mr. Scarlett, I suppose?"

Penelope paused in her work and glanced over her shoulder at the unusual client who wore a silk hat in the morning.

"Ah—er—precisely," he stammered.

"Mr. Harmon will see you presently," said Penelope shortly and resumed her work.

Algy strolled languidly over to the window, his attention attracted by the clanging bell of a fire engine passing at that moment.

"There's something frightfully terrifying, isn't there, the way those chaps tear through the streets," he observed.

Penelope did not deign to answer.

Algy looked at Penelope curiously. As a rule, he had not found typists in solicitors' offices so zealous in their work that they could not spare a moment or two in conversation with a not unattractive young man. He strolled over to Penelope's side, tapping his walking stick against his boot.

"By Jove," he said admiringly, "it's jolly the way those pretty fingers of yours fly over the keys."

Penelope flushed angrily and transfixed Algy with a direct stare.

"I shall be extremely obliged if you will allow me to continue my work without further interruption. Be seated, please."

Algy subsided meekly into a chair.

But his position did not suit Penelope at all. From where he sat it would be perfectly easy for him to read the page that she was typing. She indicated a chair near the window.

"The chair you are sitting on belongs to one of the stenographers. You will find that one over there more comfortable."

He rose with so great an alacrity, and so evidently crestfallen and contrite at his imprudent remark, that Penelope's rancor melted into contemptuous amusement. She should have known better, but she could not forbear the thrust:

"There may be another fire engine passing to amuse you."

"Thank you," said Algy gratefully.

Her vexation was not at an end. Somehow she was conscious, absurdly conscious, that he was regarding her with furtive admiration. And in her annoyance she found herself repeatedly striking the wrong keys. As her exasperation against him grew, her mistakes became more pronounced. Now she inserted a carbon the wrong way; now she had misspelled "Mazie," and now she had lost her place and left out a whole line.

Her relief was great when Joshua Harmon ushered out his client and rather frigidly invited the impertinent Mr. Scarlett to come into his private office.

Even now she found it difficult to concentrate her attention on the case of "St. Clair vs. Botherick." He had mistaken her for one of the stenographers of the office, of course, and the mistake rankled.

She glanced at the clock. It was almost one. She had dawdled over her work long enough, and Mr. Harmon had reminded her that it was urgent. Resolutely, therefore, she bent her attention to her task.

Half an hour passed before the green baize door flew open and Joshua Harmon ushered out his client.

"Will you lunch with me at my club, Mr. Scarlett?"

"Thanks very much, but I am engaged. In fact, a friend is to call for me here at one o'clock."

Algy glanced at his watch, and then rather doubtfully at Penelope.

"Quite so. Make yourself at home, sir." He fluttered a bony hand toward Penelope, who was still ticking industriously away at her typewriter. "This is Miss Yard. Miss Yard is reading law in my office. That is the stuff our American girls are made of, sir." He bent over Penelope's shoulder. "Will you get through that matter before lunch, Penelope?"

"If it is really necessary," said Penelope coldly, annoyed at this somewhat unceremonious introduction.

"You have only a page more, I see. I should be much obliged if you could finish it at once."

"Very well."

When Joshua Harmon, in a hurry as always, slammed the door behind him, Algy was still staring at Penelope in utter consternation.

Penelope Yard! It was the I. P.—Fanny's stepdaughter!

Should he introduce himself, or should he hold his peace and trust to luck for the future meeting? The latter, he decided, certainly promised the more adventures, for he generally chose the more devious path.

"Do you mind my smoking, Miss Yard?" he asked meekly.

Penelope bowed at her typewriter.

He fingered nervously the cigar he had taken from his case. "Does that mean that you do mind?"

Penelope shook her head.

"Pardon me; am I to understand that the shaking of your head signifies that smoking is objectionable to you?"

"The odor of tobacco is merely one of the minor inconveniences of a stenographer's life," said Penelope acidly.

"Thanks very much." He coolly lighted his cigar. Then, after a pause: "Would it bore you too much to tell me what are the major inconveniences?"

"Interruptions to our work are not the least exasperating." Penelope struck the keys with vicious energy.

Algy seated himself on the chair from which he had been ejected a few moments previous.

"Your machine makes such a lot of noise that it's difficult to understand you over there," he continued hopefully. He had made her talk—that was a point. "May I ask the pertinency of your use of the possessive pronoun, 'ours'? You said, you know, 'our work.' Do you mean my work and yours? Or the work of stenographers in general? But you can't mean that, can you, because you are not a stenographer."

"I shall be extremely obliged if you will allow me to continue my work without further interruption," replied Penelope, determined not to smile at his absurdities.

"I should never dream of interrupting your work," Algy assured her earnestly.

"But you *are*," Penelope faced him, her hands folded in her lap.

"But this typing is only your pastime," returned Algy serenely. "I suppose it's something of a relief from the arduous study of the law—this tum, tum, tum on the machine." He examined the machine with interest.

Penelope coughed and pushed back her chair impatiently. Crossing the room to the heavy window, she struggled to open it.

"You should have told me that my beastly smoking annoyed you."

He lifted the sash and tossed his cigar into the street.

"Your English police must be extraordinarily lax," she observed in cold disapproval. "If a policeman in New York saw you do that he would arrest you."

"What a lot the study of the law does teach one!" observed Algy in profound admiration. "But how did you know I was an Englishman?"

"American men respect the sanctity of the business office, Mr. Scarlett."

"Oh, yes," said Algy comfortably. "When the American business man goes downtown to worship in his Temple of Mammon, he wears somber black. I've noticed that."

A sudden breeze from the open window played havoc with Penelope's neatly typed pages. She uttered a cry of consternation and stooped to pick them up. But Algy was before her.

"One of 'em has blown behind your desk," said Algy, squirming to get a glimpse of the truant page.

"Perhaps your walking stick can reach it," said Penelope anxiously, "but please be careful not to crumple the page."

"I'll be very careful," he promised. "Ah, I can feel the beggar. Here it is. I say, how beautifully you do type for an amateur!"

To Penelope's horror, he was coolly scanning the page.

"You mustn't read that," she cried anxiously. "These papers are confidential."

"Awfully sorry," apologized Algy, "but old Bother's name here caught my eye. You see, he happens to be a sort of

chum of mine. I know him, in a way—this Lord Botherick."

"I am not surprised," was Penelope's sarcastic comment. "It is a common observation that birds of a feather flock together, Mr. Scarlett."

"That is to punish me, I suppose, for my cheeky observation concerning the—h'm—fingers," said Algy remorsefully. "I really am awfully sorry, and I hope you'll forgive me. And I feel I ought to tell you, Miss Yard—that you ought to know—that is, that I am—"

"Was it nice of you to say things to a stenographer that you would not to a lady to whom you had been introduced, Mr. Scarlett? And was it nice of you to read papers not intended for you to see? And, pardon me, but I have no interest whatever in friends of a dissipated, degenerate English peer like Lord Botherick."

Algy grinned. He had been about to confess his identity and that he had made Fanny's charming acquaintance. But he dearly loved a joke, and to discuss the vices of this notorious Lord Botherick was a temptation.

"From your viewpoint, Miss Yard, that is, as a lawyer," he demanded timidly, "I suppose it would be difficult for you to conscientiously defend him—I mean legally defend him."

"A lawyer does not gossip about his clients."

"Then, as a woman—"

"As a woman, he doesn't exist for me," said Penelope with disdain.

"Poor chap! Unfortunate chap!" Algy cast his eyes mournfully toward the ceiling. "What a lot of wretched annoyance the poor beggar would have been spared if he had had your knowledge of the law, Miss Yard!"

"A dissipated Englishman of the type of Lord Botherick is too shallow-brained to be restrained in his vices by any fear of possible consequences," said Penelope.

"Yes, a sad dog, this Botherick fellow. Would it interest you if I regaled you with a little gossip about this dissipated English peer?"

"It would not," declared Penelope, having finished her task at last, in spite

of the distressing interruptions. "I am already chagrined at my indiscretion in discussing a client of Mr. Harmon. He would strongly disapprove."

She turned the pages face downward, and placed a paperweight over them. Then, standing before a mirror, she adjusted her hat, which she had taken down from its peg. She wished this friend of Lord Botherick's to understand that their *tête-à-tête* was at an end.

"Imagine a man, fat and prematurely bald," Algy persisted, not to be denied his joke. "Step uncertain and tottering—speech thick and incoherent—in short, a physiological monstrosity."

Penelope suspended her hatpin and looked at Algy, at once fascinated by this little sketch and horrified.

"And people talk of a short life and a merry one," she said scornfully.

"His hand," continued Algy, waxing eloquent, "is palsied from his excesses; his baggy eyes are continually weeping; his skin is a bilious green."

"Horrible!" Penelope jabbed the pin through her hat.

"They say his excesses have brought on softening of the brain."

"Surely you exaggerate," said Penelope, her hand at the doorknob.

"The bilious skin," Algy continued solemnly, "means cirrhosis of the liver; the trembling hands, incipient paralysis; the tottering step, locomotor ataxia; and—"

"My knowledge of the law," murmured Penelope, "is nowhere beside your medical knowledge. A most curious and diverting diagnosis. Good morning."

"Damn it!" said Algy irritably, when Penelope had vanished. It had been an amusing half hour. And yet he might have employed it to a better purpose. Of course she did not take seriously this caricature of himself. But when she learned who he really was, it was doubtful if she would forgive him for making fun of her.

His reflections were cut short by the hurried entrance of Billy Merrick.

"Sorry to be late, Bother, my boy; hope you haven't been too bored waiting."

"The I. P. has entertained me," said Algy with a grin.

"I. P.? Who's the I. P.?" demanded Billy suspiciously.

"Mrs. Yard's priggish stepdaughter, of course—the Infant Prodigy. She has been typing the case of 'St. Clair vs. Botherick,' and I have been airily sketching for her a portrait of this dissipated English peer."

"Unregenerate sinner," chuckled Billy. "You were posing as the righteous Mr. Scarlett, of course?"

"It was old Harmon's fault," grumbled Algy. "He shouldn't have introduced me as Scarlett. But, my dear William, what a character I have given myself—what a character! And I say, Billy, she has the most alluring gray eyes."

"You come along to lunch," said Billy, taking Algy firmly by the arm. "Not two hours ago you were telling me how charming my sister was. One set of alluring green eyes ought to be enough for you, my gay Lothario."

IX

"Isn't this little river adorable?" sighed Fanny languorously.

"Rippin'," said Algy with enthusiasm. "A placid stream, a cigarette, a canoe, and the right bit of femininity facing one, with her parasol to top off things—one can forget the naughty world for five minutes, eh?"

"Philistine! I was speaking of the beauty of the river," said Fanny in rebuke.

"Always preferred portraits to landscapes," declared Algy, and he smiled reminiscently at another portrait he had drawn a few days before. "Duck, Fanny! 'Ware that bough."

Fanny ducked—the overhanging willow sweeping her parasol lightly.

"Careless Algy!"

"It was your fault, you know."

"Indeed, sir!" Fanny raised innocent eyebrows. "And why, pray?"

"You shouldn't be so frightfully distracting."

"Shall I lower my parasol then—so?"

"That doesn't help things a bit.

Adam never appreciated his garden so much as when the angel shut the gates."

"I'm glad I'm the right bit of femininity, however," Fanny murmured faintly behind the parasol. "Just what does that mean?"

"What does it always mean?" returned Algy cautiously.

"But for only five minutes, you say," Fanny said discontentedly, the parasol still shielding her.

Algy steered the canoe past a sunken bough, and the conversation into a more vague and less dangerous channel.

"Five minutes is better than a dreary hour sometimes, Fanny. If the five minutes are pleasant, why worry about the other fifty-five dull ones?"

"You are profoundly philosophical this morning," said Fanny, still behind the parasol.

Algy smiled craftily. Badinage was all very well; flirtations were all very well—but leading questions were to be begged.

The canoe shot swiftly around a bend of the stream. A startled heron rose squawking.

"Whew, what a jolly shot! Wish I had a gun."

"Brute! Isn't even a harmless bird safe when you appear, O destroyer of happiness?" said Fanny. "It is all very well for you to have your fun, lord of creation, but you leave the poor bird to languish."

"Bally rot," grumbled matter-of-fact Algy. "When I shoot, Fanny, I kill."

"What a comfort for the poor bird!"

"Sentimental little Fanny!"

"Cruel and heartless Algy!"

"But to be so concerned over a silly bird!"

"I wasn't thinking only of the birds," said Fanny faintly.

"I say, you are such a deep one. Do put down that confounded parasol, there's a dear. I am sure you are laughing at me behind it."

"Then let me assure you I am not laughing at all," said Fanny, still obstinately unheeding his request. "Now are you satisfied?"

"I am not. That frippery cloud of lace hides the sun."

"Don't be absurd. The sun is over there to your left. However, if you insist—is that better?" Fanny tilted the parasol behind her charming head.

"Rather! Thanks so much."

But now that the glimpse of paradise had been vouchsafed him, Algy, suddenly fearful of its compelling beauty, prudently bent his eyes to the swiftly moving stream and paddled in absorbed silence. Fanny regarded him at once thoughtfully and curious.

"Weren't we stupid not to have thought of this sweet river before?" she asked presently.

"One is lucky to discover sweet things, even at the eleventh hour."

"At the eleventh hour!" echoed Fanny, dismayed. "Is time flying so fast?"

"I hope not," cried Algy, alarmed.

"All delightful hours must end," said Fanny very wisely.

"But, pessimist, in Arcadia hours aren't arbitrary periods."

"Quite true, optimist. They are in Bedminster, however."

"Not for me," said Algy firmly. "Why should there be for you? You aren't a suffragette like the I. P. Your speeches are not limited to five minutes. Your delightful little tongue can wag along to its heart's content, and your audience never slyly refers to his watch. Then why should you dismally prate—like the foreboding raven—of the never-more?"

"Because," answered Fanny, rippling her hand in the stream, "I am a restless person, and I have made up my mind that Bedminster bores me."

"Bores you!" cried chagrined Algy. "That is rather rough on me."

"You are not Bedminster," said Fanny archly. "Don't look so hurt. The one sweet thing that has made tolerable my humdrum life here is your charming companionship."

"Then why will you run away from the sweet thing?"

"Sweet things are bad for one—if one takes too much of them. It is much more healthy not to indulge in them at all."

"A cabbage is healthy," growled Algy. "I should much prefer to be—"

"The sweet thing, I suppose."

"Say, rather, the rose that is kissed by the butterfly."

"A cabbage rose! A gross flower! But, seriously, I have booked my passage by the *Prinz Wilhelm* a week from next Saturday."

"What a beastly shame!" Algy struck the paddle angrily into the quiet waters.

Fanny saw the frown not without some elation.

"I expect that Penelope will make quite a fuss," she continued complacently. "But, after all, I am thinking chiefly of her. I don't at all approve of these legal studies." Then after a pause: "I should like you to have met Penelope. Penelope is a dear, even if you do call her I. P."

Algy smiled. He had not told Fanny that he had met her stepdaughter in Joshua Harmon's office. First of all, because he dearly loved a practical joke. The joke would be the more diverting, he decided, if Fanny as well as Penelope were kept in ignorance. Then, too, he had made the discovery that Fanny was an extremely jealous little person, and he reflected that the episode might not seem so diverting to her as it did to himself. He had, therefore, kept discreetly silent; for he was an easy going young man and detested explanations. If he did not enlighten Fanny now it was because he was too dismayed at hearing of her sudden decision to leave Bedminster.

"It would be nice if we landed by those willows there near the bridge," suggested Fanny.

"Splendid!" cried Algy, forgetting all about Penelope. Deftly he turned the pliant canoe to the leafy bank and stepped ashore.

"Now your hand, Fanny. Steady there. Wouldn't it be jolly if we had brought lunch?"

"Must the gross cabbage rose be always thinking of its nourishment?" said Fanny, nestling invitingly against a boulder and adjusting her skirts. "And roses ought not to be selfish. They exist to give one pleasure. Can my rose sing?"

Algy flung himself on the greensward, his legs comfortably stretched, his hands clasped behind his head and his Panama tilted over his eyes. "I'll try, if you aren't too critical, charming butterfly."

"Here will we sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks—
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals."

"Charming and most appropriate!" cried Fanny. "We have the rocks, you see, the river and the melodious birds. And you, Algy, shall no longer be the rose, but the shepherd swain."

"I'll be Corydon," murmured Algy, "if you'll be Phyllis."

"Sing again then, Corydon."

"With pleasure, sweet Phyllis."

"The shepherd swains shall dance and sing,
For they delight in each May morning.
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love."

Fanny looked down on him as he sang, and blushed with pleasure. How delightfully boyish he was! How rarely free from self-consciousness and egotism! She had spoken lightly of leaving Bedminster just now, but she was sure she would miss her charming comrade.

And must she ruthlessly end the delightful flirtation? Alas, yes! Mrs. Grundy was peering down at them even now from the bridge yonder. People were beginning to talk in Bedminster; and Fanny was beginning to realize that the game was too dangerous for her own peace of mind. But this hour at least she would seize. It was her own.

"Now it is your turn to sing, sweet Phyllis," said Algy caressingly, after a long silence.

"Poor Phyllis can't sing a note," said Fanny regretfully. "She can't trill madrigals like the melodious birds or clever Algy."

"Then Phyllis must speak her piece. Come!"

"Jack and Joan, they think no ill,
But—something or other—five merry still—"

"Oh, I can't remember, Algy."

"Please try to. It's awfully quaint."

Thus encouraged, Fanny puckered up her forehead and did remember presently:

"Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a simple tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And apples turn till they be soft."

"Isn't that a contented picture of married felicity, Algy?"

"Happy Jack and Joan," mumbled Algy—a grass blade between his teeth. "What comes next?"

"Joan can call by name the cows—"

("Isn't she clever?")

"And deck her windows with green boughs."

("And so artistic!")

"She can wreaths and tutties make—"

"What are tutties, Algy? They sound nice."

"And trim with plums a—very nice cake."

"What kind of a cake?" demanded Algy suspiciously.

"A very nice cake," glibly said Fanny.

"Very nice cake!" He scoffed. "It was wedding cake or bridal cake, I'm sure. Confess, coy Phyllis. Could you trim with plums a bridal cake, like thrifty Mistress Joan?"

"Could you, like industrious Master Jack, supply the plums? I can make the wreath, at any rate."

She flung the ferns she had been plaiting over Algy's neck:

"But you haven't told me what tutties mean? You have studied at Oxford and ought to know."

"Confound the tutties! I want to know why you are running away from Bedminster."

"I've told you. It is the only way to get Penelope away from those dusty law books. Besides, people are so stupid. They won't let one have a good time without gossiping. Yes, Bother dear, you are coming to Bedminster quite too often."

"Oh, rubbish! Whose business is it to care how often I come?"

"Well, Penelope's, for instance."

Algy flung a posy of wild flowers in Fanny's lap.

"What the deuce has the I. P. to say about it, anyhow?"

"She disapproves of you utterly."

Algy sat up alertly and hugged his knees. "How do you know?"

"She told me so. She was here last Sunday. It seems that she typed some papers bearing on your notorious affair with that Mazie creature."

"You seem frightfully in awe of that stepdaughter of yours. As for her thinking that I'm such a bad lot, you know as well as I do that I'm not as black as I am painted."

"I'm not so certain of that. Penelope hinted at corroborative proof."

"What kind of proof?"

"Besides," continued Fanny, ignoring his question, "Penelope is tired of the law and the Martha Washington."

"The—what?" asked Algy, the name arresting his attention for the moment.

"The Martha Washington is a woman's hotel."

"No man admitted?"

"Certainly not."

"No wonder she is tired of the law."

"Conceited young man! It isn't the law that wearies her so much as the disgusting class of people who come into the lawyers' offices."

"Eh, what? The client chaps, you mean?" demanded Algy uneasily.

"Yes. Actually, an impudent young man tried to flirt with her the other day."

"Horribly reprehensible!" murmured Algy, looking at Fanny intently.

"He deliberately read confidential papers."

"Perhaps he didn't mean to," pleaded Algy, ill at ease, as he decided that Fanny was very much in earnest.

"Not only that," continued Fanny indignantly—"he made the rudest remarks about her hands."

"Surely the I. P. exaggerated things."

"The creature imagined she was only a stenographer, you see. There *are* men who think that stenographers are fair game."

"Are you not making a mountain out of a molehill?"

"Now you see why I am quite resolved that Penelope must drop the law. She won't do that so long as I remain at Bedminster. But if I go abroad Penelope will go with me. She will be afraid to let me go alone. Then, you see, I must think

of myself. People, Bother dear, are beginning to talk."

"Hang the people!"

"Please do be sensible. This is a horrid world. They do peer and pry so—on our nice platonic friendship, for instance."

"I suppose you are right," acquiesced Algy reluctantly. "But it's jolly well as if I were being driven away."

"How unreasonable and sulky you are! Of course I don't *want* to drive you away. I like you awfully, Algy. You are so different from other men—all the stockbroking crowd—all the dead-in-earnest American young men. You know how to *play* beautifully. You can skate so cleverly on thin ice and you never tumble in. I adore that kind of man—the man who won't be serious. Because I'm that sort, too, and I detest being serious."

The contrariness of puppy dogs and young men! Puppy dogs never feel hungry until the biscuit is taken away from them; young men rarely come to the point until rosy Venus smiles farewell through her tears.

Algy, who had prided himself on being such a wary old trout—who could scent the hook and wobble his head derisively—impetuously and recklessly swallowed it now. Fanny was in his arms, smothered with kisses.

"But I am not playing," he murmured between kisses. "I am head over heels in love with you, bewitching, adorable Fanny! You *are* my sort, the most fascinating, the cleverest Fanny in the world. And I love you, love you! And I shall sail with you on the *Prinz Wilhelm* a week from next Saturday."

X

AND Penelope the scorner of men? Penelope, the wise and prudent?

Alas that Minerva's mien should be so forbidding! No melodious birds come at her call. Only one solemn owl, to blink on her shoulder and squawk. When Minerva stalks abroad, eyeglass on nose, children hide and lovers flee; the strings of the lyre are silenced; flowers droop

their heads and wither. A dreary existence her sad-eyed disciples lead.

But did Penelope never stand longingly at the wall that bounds Minerva's court, and peek at the revels in the pleasant garden of Venus, where fountains play and Pan pipes and lovers dance? Sometimes, it must be confessed. But only one peep, or at most two; for Minerva is a stern and jealous taskmistress.

Penelope was peeping now, though one would never have dreamed it.

"Every Man His Own Lawyer" was propped against the water bottle in front of her, opened at the page headed, "Duties of Executors and Administrators." For Penelope was waiting for her luncheon to be served in the restaurant of the Martha Washington; but the Daughters of Reform were making the hotel their headquarters, and had demoralized the service.

The said surplusage to be paid to the widow of the intestate (vide L 1900, Sec. 168, p. 203); and all the residue by equal portions to and among the child or children of the aforesaid intestate. . . .

Mechanically, to cheat Mistress Minerva, Penelope's lips formed the words. But the yellow page faded away. It became a magic crystal ball, wherein she saw reflected the wooded hills of Bedminster, stretches of green fields, cattle browsing by quiet waters, and in the very center of the picture Fanny in her dewy rose garden, the Man at her shoulder—the mysterious man mentioned in Fanny's letters so carelessly but so often.

Who was this persistent male, this intruder whose black shadow fell across Fanny's rose garden? Why was Fanny so provokingly vague in her references to him? His age, his looks, his profession, his very name were unknown to her.

"The amusing creature from Brad-dox," "that absurd dawdler," "my squire of dames"—in these terms Fanny had described him.

A squire of dames! The words were ominous. The amusing creature! Then he diverted Fanny. She was flirting with him. And how desperately? Supposing Fanny were in earnest, could she

approve of this dawdler and buffoon? She doubted it.

In vain she tried to forget her anxiety by turning resolutely to her book. Her conscience pricked her. What folly to have left Fanny to her own devices so long! Had she not been solemnly entrusted with the key to Fanny's heart, as well as to her treasure chest? While she had been sedulously guarding the one, had this man stolen the other? There was nothing for it but to go to Bedminster on the morrow—and to send the man about his business. This resolution taken, she again endeavored to concentrate her mind on the duties of administrators and executors.

In case any child or children shall have any estate, by settlement from the said intestate, or shall be advanced by said intestate in his or her lifetime, by portion not equal to the share which will be due to the other children by such distribution as aforesaid, then so much of the estate of said intestate shall be—

A gloved hand fell lightly on Penelope's shoulder. "Every Man His Own Lawyer" fell to the floor with a bang. Radiant Fanny was smiling down at her.

"Oh, foolishly wise virgin!" said Fanny tenderly; "suffragette among suffragettes, dowdy frump seated in the midst of dowdy frumps—shameless child, to pursue 'Every Man His Own Lawyer' even to the lunch table!"

"Darling, silly mamma! If you knew how glad I am to see you!"

"And he has been ill treating you—this 'Every Man His Own Lawyer,'" said Fanny indignantly, as she noted Penelope's heavy eyes and pale cheeks. "He has been ponderous and dull and frightfully exacting. I insist that you divorce him—on the grounds of incompatibility. The idea of cuddling up to this dry-as-dust bore, when there are straight-limbed Apollos to amuse you!"

"Is the mysterious man you have written to me about so often a straight limbed Apollo, mamma?"

Penelope was smiling, but she was serious, too.

"Who are these extraordinary persons with the flaming badges of purple and red?" asked Fanny, hastening to turn the subject.

"The Ohio chapter of the Daughters of Reform."

"Heavens!" sniffed Fanny. "And what is printed on the badges?"

"Anti-rum, Anti-racing, Anti-tobacco."

"Monsters! And you actually prefer the companionship of these anti-rum-racing tobaccoists to mine! It isn't flattering, Penelope."

"But I don't, mamma."

"Then why aren't you at Bedminster?"

"Why are you not there?"

At this innocent question Fanny fidgeted in her seat. Guilt was written on her charming face, palpable guilt.

"You have been extravagant."

"No, no!" Fanny glibly reassured her. "I have been a very pattern of virtue in that regard. My bankbook balanced almost perfectly. There was a discrepancy of only fifty-seven dollars and thirteen cents when it was balanced last week. And there was lots of money when I went to the bank this morning to draw it out."

"To draw it out?" Penelope looked at Fanny steadily.

"Dearest," she said, drawing her chair close to her stepdaughter's, "the time has come, as the Walrus said, to talk of many things."

Penelope nodded gravely, prepared for the worst.

"First of all, you aren't going to be cooped up in this drab and dreary Spinsters' Retreat all summer, are you?"

"What would you say if I confessed I was tired of being—"

"A spinster?" cried Fanny rapturously. "I should adore to see you in love."

"Do be sensible. Tired of studying law, I was going to say. This hot weather and your delightful letters make me long for the country."

"Bedminster," returned Fanny plaintively, "is a dull little hole, after all. The people are so clannish. And I have been lonely, Penelope."

"You won't be lonely when I am with you," suggested Penelope hopefully.

"And sometimes," continued Fanny desperately, "I think Bedminster is

damp. You know I am very delicate, and I don't think it agrees with me. I simply must have a change. Why was I so stupid as to plan spending the whole summer in prosaic America when Paris is so gay and distracting and the English country so beautiful?"

"Later," promised Penelope, "if I can find time, we will run over together. But this is impossible now. There's the house rented and the servants engaged."

"Nowadays nobody thinks anything of going abroad for a few weeks and leaving a house and servants."

"Surely you aren't thinking of sailing immediately?" exclaimed Penelope, aghast.

"Yes, I—I was thinking of it," confessed Fanny.

"That is impossible, mamma," said Penelope with great decision. "It is out of the question."

"I think that is for me to judge, Penelope," asserted Fanny with some heat.

"Oh, certainly, if you can afford it!"

"Darling, don't be cross. Besides, I have booked my passage."

Penelope stooped and picked up "Every Man His Own Lawyer" and tucked it under her arm. The action signified that the discussion was closed as far as she was concerned.

"You have booked your passage and not one word of warning to me. Evidently you did not wish me to go with you. By what boat are you sailing, and when?"

"I knew you would object," confessed Fanny tearfully, "and I do detest arguments so; surely you have no right to dictate and criticize everything I do, Penelope."

"You have not answered my question, mamma," said Penelope frostily.

"Then, if it interests you, I sail by the *Prinz Wilhelm* a week from next Saturday."

"Why the *Prinz Wilhelm*? And why a week from next Saturday?"

"Why not the *Prinz Wilhelm* as well as the *Queen Louise*? Why not next week as well as the week after?" retorted Fanny flippantly. "I hate planning

things weeks ahead. It reminds me too much of poor Thomas. Besides—" Fanny looked at her stepdaughter appealingly.

"Ah," said Penelope in the calmness of despair, "there is the mysterious man. I have guessed it for some time. Your letters were significant for what they did not say. It requires no remarkable acumen on my part to come to the conclusion that you are sailing by that boat and at that date because he is sailing by the same boat and on the same date."

"I had decided days before he knew it," protested Fanny hotly.

"He has proposed, of course?" Penelope's voice was coldly matter-of-fact.

"I refuse to be catechized in this manner."

"He can't be worthy of you or you would answer my question."

"He is a dear, Penelope—so handsome, and the sunniest temper in the world."

"Once you called him an absurd buffoon," replied Penelope stubbornly, "a flirt and a spendthrift."

"How dare you say so? I never, never did!"

"I may as well tell you, mamma, that I doubt if I could conscientiously consent to your marrying such a man."

"Sometimes," said Fanny, her voice trembling with indignation, "I could choke you. When you talk like that you are Thomas again in petticoats. No, I am not going to be angry, but as a lawyer you are a lamentable failure. Lawyers *never* decide things until they have all the evidence."

"I am a woman before I am a lawyer, mamma. Who is this man who has dared make love to you behind my back?"

"You wickedly unfair child, I *shall* choke you if you aren't careful, and before all these Daughters of Reform. To have neglected me, and then when I—when I—"

"I shall be more careful next time," interrupted Penelope with disdain.

Fanny threw down the gauntlet, her patience quite at an end.

"There isn't going to be any next time," she cried wrathfully. "Please

understand that once and for all. Cut me off with a penny—I don't care. I won't marry another Thomas, though you drag me to the altar with wild horses. You sha'n't dictate to me whom I am to love and whom I am to marry, Thomas and you and all the lawyers to the contrary. If it puffs up your pride to dole out pocket money to me—then dole. You may have Thomas's prudence, but when it comes to love you are an idiot. You are no more capable of judging whom it is fitting for me to marry than one of these anti-rum-racing-tobacco women over there."

"Every word that you say justifies my intuitions. The man is not worthy of you."

"Your intuitions, indeed! The intuitions of a schoolgirl!"

"If you were not a little ashamed of him," continued Penelope calmly, "you would not defend him so vehemently."

"Ashamed of him!" cried Fanny, pale with anger. "Why, there is not a woman in Braddox—no, not in New York—who wouldn't jump at the chance of marrying him."

"And my suspicion is not lessened as to his unworthiness by the fact that you have deliberately refrained from telling me his name."

"He is Lord Algernon Botherick! There!"

Penelope held up both hands as if to ward off an impending calamity.

"No, no, mamma, you can't mean that! You are not in earnest! Oh, it is impossible! That degenerate, dissipated nobleman! That monster!"

Fanny fought valiantly to restrain her temper. She made her last plea.

"I was afraid you would be prejudiced against him. The newspapers have said such unkind things. He may have been foolish and indiscreet, but lots of nice men have done foolish things that they were sorry for afterward. Only generally they are not found out. But he is good, Penelope, and clean through and through."

"On the outside, perhaps. A toad is clean on the outside," said Penelope bitterly. "But it isn't the gossip of the newspapers that makes me abhor this

man. I know all about him—all, I say. Didn't I type the disgraceful correspondence between the lawyers of that woman and the lawyers of this—this *roué*?"

"Penelope!" Fanny's green eyes were blazing.

"I am sorry to hurt you, but never shall I give my consent for you to marry him."

"Thomas's will compels you to be unprejudiced."

"What I know of this man is founded on fact, mamma." Penelope was adamant.

"See him, and your prejudices will crumble into dust."

"I refuse to see him—absolutely."

"Sail with me on the *Prinz Wilhelm*. You will have a whole week to know him. If at the end of the voyage you don't approve of him, I'll break it off."

"No, mamma," said Penelope obstinately; "what you ask is impossible. It is quite likely that he may twist me around his little finger. Lots of wicked men have charm and a way with them. If they weren't so clever they couldn't deceive women so. I have passed judgment on Lord Botherick. I have seen proofs of his depravity. I refuse, not only to sail by the *Prinz Wilhelm* with you, but even to meet him."

"Penelope, you are making me very unhappy."

"I am sorry, but I can't help it."

"Then will you please write me a cheque for three thousand?"

Poor Penelope was too disconsolate to remind Fanny that she had already overdrawn her income. She bowed her head in silence.

"I shall see you before I sail, of course," said Fanny tearfully.

"Certainly."

Fanny kissed her stubborn guardian, who sat cold and still, as if carved in marble.

"Good-bye, foolish virgin," she said tenderly. "Some day you will know what a very, very foolish virgin you are."

And so Penelope was left there in the retreat for unprotected females, sitting in the seat of the scornful, Minerva's

solemn owl on her shoulder, squawking approval.

Again we lament that the mien of Minerva should be so forbidding.

XI

WHEN, that afternoon, Penelope returned to Joshua Harmon's office, she told him abruptly that she had decided after all not to go to Bedminster.

"You must," he said peremptorily. "I won't have you here cluttering up the office. I shall have you sick on my hands. Besides, I'm off to the mountains myself next week."

Penelope smiled a thin smile. "I have never been ill in my life."

"Knock wood—knock wood. Lord, to defy the superstitions in that reckless fashion! The fact is, my dear, you are taking this trust too seriously. I mean the sentimental tomfoolery of your father's will."

Penelope indignantly faced her co-trustee. "You didn't call that provision of the will tomfoolery when it was read, Mr. Harmon."

"Before Fanny? Of course not. But I thought it a joke, nevertheless. I think so now. But jokes are not to be taken too seriously, Penelope."

"Papa did not mean it as a joke," said Penelope gravely.

"Well, well, perhaps not. But you can take it that way."

"No, I cannot."

"Why not? Has Fanny been getting into mischief? And at whom is she flinging that saucy head of hers now—the butcher, the baker or the candlestick maker?"

"No one so respectable as any of those," said Penelope dolefully.

Joshua Harmon had been looking over his fishing tackle, and was in an excellent humor.

"Remember, Fanny isn't a highbrow like you, my dear."

"You mean she is not dull and prosy, I suppose," said Penelope coldly.

"Well, frankly, you are a chip of the old block, you know. And the old block was grand stuff—tough and sea-

soned and sound to the core. Good, good—so far as the old block was concerned. But once, Penelope, that old block was a sapling—joyously basking in the sun, shooting forth green leaves, rejoicing in its fresh young life. And that is what you are, my child. At least, that is what you should be—a beautiful, straight young sapling.”

“You are poetical this afternoon, Mr. Harmon,” said Penelope crossly.

But Joshua Harmon shook his finger at Penelope and marched up and down the room, flirting his coattails.

“Why don’t you fling your law books into the fire? Tear a leaf out of Fanny’s book of life, my dear. You’ll find all the tricks there—all the kittenish, alluring tricks that’ll bring the boys flocking round you like bees round a posy.”

Penelope sniffed disdainfully. “It doesn’t appeal to me, Mr. Harmon; and your flock of boys would bore me.”

“My, my! If I were forty years younger I’d woo you out of hand. What milksops these youngsters of today are!”

The old gentleman threw out his chest and capered about the room to show that he was not so very old after all.

“What an impetuous lover you must have been once!” said Penelope, smiling faintly.

“Well, well, the old bones crack now, and my eyes are getting dim; but I can see a pretty girl even yet, thank the Lord. Look in the glass, child, and see what’s going to waste. That smooth forehead of yours oughtn’t to be frowning at torts and the sins of nonfeasance, and those gray eyes ought not to be troubled at Fanny’s sins, either. Those charming lips should be billing and cooing, not scolding.”

Joshua Harmon’s hints on coquetry were brought to an abrupt close by an excited tattoo on the door of his private office.

The old gentleman resented the intrusion. Old gentlemen have few pleasures, and one of them is to smack their thin lips and boast what sad dogs they have been in their impetuous youth. Penelope, too, resented the intrusion. She had been about to confess her troubles to her co-trustee.

The door was thrown violently open. Mrs. Loudon, very red of face, her bonnet at a rakish angle, entered agitatedly. “How do you do, Penelope? Joshua, I must speak to you alone.

“Well,” she cried angrily when they were alone, “have you heard the news?”

“Before you pour out the vials of your wrath on this bald head, my dear Kate, do pray straighten that headgear.”

She made a frantic but fruitless dab at the offending bonnet. It fell tipsily over the other ear.

“My nephew, Lord Botherick, is sailing by the *Prins Wilhelm* a week from next Saturday.”

“On the face of things,” said Joshua Harmon good-naturedly, “an ocean voyage sounds innocent enough. Your grim demeanor prepared me for arson and murder, Kate.”

“But he’s caught!” shrieked Mrs. Loudon.

“Police after him? My, my! Is it as bad as that?”

“I wish they were! It’s much more serious than that. He’s caught by that designing, deceitful widow of Thomas Yard. From the first I suspected her. But her cleverness, Joshua, her duplicity! Then I trembled to interfere. Algy is so stubborn. To have opposed him would be to add fuel to the flames. And I didn’t dream—I didn’t dream, I tell you—that he could really be in earnest.”

“Kate, your ellipses are no doubt pregnant with meaning. But please remember that you are not reading to me a novel of the distinguished Henry James. Fill up the gaps, madam. In what way does the fact that your nephew is in love with fascinating Fanny concern his sailing on the *Prins Wilhelm* a week from next Saturday?”

“Have you no imagination, Joshua? Oh, you corporation lawyers, you are ponderously dull. Do you forget that after that disgraceful Mazie episode my sister Susan packed Algy off to America and to me to keep him out of mischief?”

“Precisely. And you have proved recalcitrant to your trust, it seems. What next?”

“Joshua, don’t remind me of that,”

implored Mrs. Loudon tearfully. "How could I know that a harpy would be whistling seductively to the poor boy."

"Perhaps it was the poor boy's fault. Why didn't the poor boy stuff cotton in his ears to dull the siren's billing note?"

"I said 'harpy'!"

"You meant 'siren.'"

"If you refuse to be serious, Joshua, when I come to you in trouble—"

"I will charge you roundly for taking up so much of my time, Kate, be assured of that. Now then, the significance of Ulysses's boat—I should say the *Prinz Wilhelm*—and—"

"I must tell my story logically, if at all."

"Logically, I implore you."

And Joshua Harmon, his finger tips poised, his head nodding, listened, outwardly grave, to the ruse of sister Susan.

"Oh, maternal solicitude! Now, indeed, I understand, Kate. Hence the pertinency of the *Prinz Wilhelm*. Our lovelorn impetuous Algy is to sail to England as fast as steam can carry him to tell mamma."

"What is to be done?"

"To stop him from sailing?"

"Naturally."

"H'm! We might have him arrested. Have you missed any of the silver, Kate? A manicure file will do in a pinch."

"Joshua, you are a trial."

"Then shall we try kidnapping? But for a lawyer to suggest lawlessness—"

"Do be sensible. Haven't you *anything* to suggest?"

"I'm afraid not. Fanny is too wily an adversary for us. Ah, Kate, my age disbars me from pleading in Cupid's court. I am not clever enough, and his ruling is too arbitrary. He would quote all the precedents against me."

"Joshua Harmon, you are a sentimental idiot!"

"One moment—I have an inspiration. You say our Algy, desperately in love though he may be, cannot propose to the damsel until he shall have returned to England to pour out his love on the maternal breast and receive permission to press his suit?"

"Yes. Susan hoped of course that

during the five days on shipboard his ardor might cool."

"Good. Now listen carefully. Remedies are efficacious or not just in so far as they are nicely adjusted to the patient's disposition. What is the marked characteristic of our Algy? Fickleness, my dear Kate. He thinks himself desperately in love. But is he? Has he not thought himself just as desperately in love before?"

"Very likely."

"Precisely. Now he imagines himself in love with our fascinating widow. We would rescue him from her wicked wiles. But how? Nothing is simpler. A counter-irritant, Kate—a counter-irritant!"

"Exasperating man! I don't understand you."

"Find a counter-irritant! A discreet female—withal an attractive one. The attractive but discreet female will take passage on the *Prinz Wilhelm*. She will have five days to accomplish her fell purpose. Day by day she will skillfully allure our lovelorn Algy from the whistling siren on the enchanted isle. Then at the psychological moment, when fickle Algy has forgotten all about his enchanted isle and the far-off whistling siren succumbing to the wiles of the siren we have engaged, *our* siren—our own discreet and conscientious female—will turn up her nose at him, laugh him to scorn, give him the mitten. Result? Algy returns to mamma a chastened and wiser young man. There will be no lovelorn confessions to pour out on the maternal breast."

"Admirable, Joshua! You are a marvel of ingenuity. And where, pray, in this naughty world am I to find your alluring and withal discreet female—this paragon of paragons—this efficacious counter-irritant?"

"Ah, my dear madam, unfortunately I have never gone in for paragon hunting myself," cried old Mr. Harmon, regarding not without curiosity his angry client who was fumbling in her *portemonnaie*.

After a deal of searching, she extracted a bright new quarter and a nickel. Her sharp eyes sparkling with

malice, she laid the thirty cents on the desk before her astonished legal adviser.

"I think you have forgotten that Fanny is also to be a passenger on the *Prins Wilhelm*. Your fee, Joshua," she said solemnly. "For value received."

XII

MR. WILLIAM MERRICK did not often venture into the maelstrom of the financial district of New York City. He was apt to be buffeted quite too rudely; the crowds bewildered him, and he found it difficult to carry his walking stick at precisely the angle he affected. Indeed, a humming bird is not enamored with a bag of sixpenny nails, and Mr. William Merrick had little use for the strenuous life.

But a modest flutter in Wall Street William Merrick dearly loved—especially if the "little game" at his club had proved to be not so much a game of poker as a game of ducks and drakes, and the "little bit on" at the races a good bit off the balance of his cheque-book. And today the Goddess of Fortune had smiled. William was content.

Not even Mrs. Loudon's disapproving frown so much as ruffled his suave satisfaction. She was about to enter her brougham after the unsatisfactory interview with Mr. Harmon. Leaning heavily on the arm of her footman, she awaited his smiling approach.

"And what are *you* doing downtown?" she demanded not too graciously.

"Captain of industry, dear lady," answered Billy airily. He lowered his voice to a mysterious whisper. "May I dare to offer you a tip, Mrs. Loudon? Buy X & W."

"I never speculate," answered Mrs. Loudon severely. "Are you going uptown?"

Billy looked shrewdly at the irate lady. She was enraged, he knew, with Fanny; and she was about to vent her spite on him. But Billy accepted the challenge cheerfully.

"I have been hoping to have an opportunity to talk to you, Mr. Merrick, for a long time," said Mrs. Loudon as

soon as they had seated themselves side by side. "I suppose you are delighted with this affair of your sister with Lord Botherick?"

"Oh, so-so," assented Billy cautiously. "Only so-so."

"They are a couple of idiots."

"Nincompoops!"

"What Algy's mother will say when he waves the matrimonial flag before her frenzied eye—really, I give up the situation, Mr. Merrick."

"Penelope gave it up long ago, Mrs. Loudon. Fanny's guardian is like a mad bull—I mean cow, bereft of its young."

"Could any match be more unfitting? An inconsequential young man like Algy and a flirtatious young woman like Fanny!"

"An inconsequential mummy married to a flirtatious sphinx would be as fitting, Mrs. Loudon."

"Algy is dependent on his mother. It is not as if he had money of his own."

"Fanny is tied to her trustee's apron string. It isn't as if she could look a dollar honestly in the face."

"Mr. Merrick!"

"Mrs. Loudon!"

"Are you making fun of me?"

"Are you of me, Mrs. Loudon?"

"Then are you one with me in trying to prevent this wretched match?"

Billy shrugged his shoulders.

"What is to be done? I am never too old to learn things. Fanny has the rash impetuosity of Niagara Falls. Can I stop the falls by catching the water in my hat, Mrs. Loudon?"

"If you are really serious you wouldn't sit there purring like a Cheshire cat. You would think of some plan."

She tapped Billy's knee so smartly that his foot gave a spasmodic jump. Billy tapped his knee in precisely the same place, and as it again jumped he looked at the erratic member in alarm.

"Funny how it jumps, isn't it? Wonder if I'm in for paralysis or something? I don't like the way my leg behaves a little bit."

"It's only reflex action, irritating creature. I see it's no use trying to

talk to you sensibly. Where shall I drop you?"

Mrs. Loudon sighed. But Billy, reassured by the favorable prognosis, faced her, serious at last.

"You know, of course, the terms of my late brother-in-law's comic opera will? Very well. Then, Mrs. Loudon, if your nephew marries my sister half of Fanny's principal is forfeited. Naturally, I am not shouting a paean of joy to know that my sister will lose half of her income."

"Then you ought to do something," said Mrs. Loudon angrily.

Billy caressed his cheek with the round crook of his walking stick.

"What would you suggest?" he asked blandly. "My dear Mrs. Loudon, there is absolutely nothing to be done—at present. If these precious idiots insist on being so unbusinesslike as to marry, we must labor diligently with Penelope's holy Conscience—we must whack it on the head and put it to sleep—an eternal sleep. But I for my part shrink from tackling that mighty Conscience until our nincompoops are hitched."

"If that catastrophe takes place, Penelope *must* approve willy-nilly," declared Mrs. Loudon grimly.

"It will take a lot of arguing," warned Billy. "To be frank with you, Mrs. Loudon, though I resent Penelope's interference, I'm not so sure that I don't sympathize with her point of view."

"Are you casting reflections on the character of my nephew, Mr. Merrick?"

"Not a bit of it," Billy answered cheerfully. "Botherick is a bully fellow. I like him a lot—on the hunting field. No man I'd sooner stand beside with a gun, the pheasants whirling overhead. Botherick is a sportsman and a gentleman. But when it comes to betting on his constancy in a love affair, long odds wouldn't tempt me."

"And Fanny's constancy, Mr. Merrick?"

"It is to laugh at," confessed Billy with cheerful frankness. "There's our one wee crumb of comfort. Much may happen during this voyage—a whole week."

"What, for instance?" snapped Mrs. Loudon.

"Well, they won't be the only passengers, you know, on the *Prinz Wilhelm*. There'll be other handsome men for Fanny, and other pretty girls for Algy. Both of them are incorrigible flirts. You don't happen to know, I suppose, of an alluring damsel to tempt your Algy?"

"Do tell me where I am to drop you. You are as exasperating as Joshua Harmon. He prattled nonsensically about a counter-irritant—an antidote."

"Did he really? The canny old boy! There you are now—two geniuses with but a single thought."

"At least I *must* prevent them sailing on the same boat."

She no longer even listened to her flippant companion. Her agile wits were planning an attack on Fanny—an artful appeal to her pride.

Billy, too, was plunged into profound thought; and if Mrs. Loudon had known him better she would have suspected the preternatural solemnity of Billy. Like a naughty child, his expression was never so cherubic as when he was planning some mischief. He sat quite still, as if in a trance, staring out of the carriage window, but quite heedless of the passing show.

At Forty-second Street a majestic policeman held up his hand and the carriage stopped. Billy awakened from his trance. He smiled seraphically.

"The oracle has spoken," he said softly. "William sees a way."

And then suddenly he waved his hand in excitement.

"Good gracious, whom are you waving to in that frantic fashion?" asked the old lady crossly.

"I told you the oracle had spoken." Billy was opening the door. "Don't you see who's over there? Penelope! And by George, if she hasn't shed her Mother Hubbard! She is in gray, and Redfern cut that suit—ten to one on it. Happy, happy omen! My enemy is delivered into my hands, clad for the sacrifice."

"I think you are quite mad," said old

Mrs. Loudon. "Tell the man to drive to the Hotel Winchester."

"Oh, blind of heart and dull of understanding!" murmured Billy, rolling up his eyes. "And will only a miracle convince you that the oracle has spoken? Penelope will lunch with me at Sherry's, and I am going to work that miracle."

XIII

BILLY disdained the dollar and a half the waiter proffered him in change. Penelope, who had been furtively trying to see the amount of the bill, compressed her lips.

"One dollar would have been more than enough," she said severely.

Billy leaned across the table and patted Penelope's hand.

"Please!" he implored. "You have been almost human during luncheon. And haven't we enjoyed ourselves? Then why not give that poor grafter a little fun, too?"

"Because it is bad sociology—"

"No, don't; there's a good little girl. Cut out the suffragette voice. Why, Penelope, I've been nursing a plaintive hope for the last half-hour that the Conscience was left at home. Do have a peep at that mirror, and see what a ravishing creature you are when you are clothed in your right mind and by Redfern. 'Pon my word every man in the restaurant is ogling you."

Penelope blushed and glanced furtively about to see if Billy spoke the truth.

"It is for Fanny's sake—my dress I mean. Black seemed to depress her so. As for my conscience, sometimes I almost wish I hadn't one. You two careless children are not overburdened in that regard, and yet how happy you are!"

"Fanny and I aren't highbrows like you. And on second thought," he added, "I don't want to smother that Conscience of yours just yet. I'm going to talk to it presently like a Dutch uncle. I am going to wrestle with it and pray to it."

"The appeal of Conscienceless Wil-

liam to the Conscientious Highbrow, I suppose," murmured Penelope.

"No; my appeal is to the *woman* in you. You are a woman sometimes, aren't you, Penelope?" he demanded plaintively. "When Fanny and I aren't around to be set examples to, don't you ever take a peek at a man once in a while?"

"I am looking at you now," said Penelope calmly.

"I mean a long, lingering look that makes a man's heart go pit-a-pat. My, but you could do a lot of damage with those gray dove's eyes of yours if you wanted to. If there is anything on this darned old earth that makes me tired, it is the woman who can but won't, and the woman who can't but who would—that is, if she could."

"You are rather obscure, you know." But Penelope, for a wonder, did not appear to resent the flattery and Billy took heart.

"Why, look around at these much manicured, marcelled, hobble-skirted desiccated females. Most of 'em are forlorn hopes. See how desperately they preen their feathers and ogle. And the men yawn at them—oh, so wearily! But *you* look at 'em *once*. You'll have 'em all silly. Try it just once."

"But, William, I don't want to," argued Penelope. "They bore me."

"Just once," implored Billy. "The old uncle over there."

"Please don't be offensive. I must go. I have an appointment at the dressmaker's at three."

"A creation at Macy's, I suppose," said Billy gloomily. "Is it twenty-nine dollars and thirty cents, marked down from thirty?"

Penelope smiled almost roguishly—for her.

"Does this frock look like it? My appointments"—she was consulting a tiny engagement book that hung on her chatelaine—"are with Lancret and Moran."

Billy pursed up his lips and whistled softly.

"By the cockcrow of Chantecler, are you going to start something—honest?"

Penelope sighed. "I am only very

tired, Billy. I have determined to take a holiday. I am thinking of some quiet cathedral town in England, where I can hide and rest."

"Alone?"

"You forget I am quite used to being alone," she answered bitterly.

"And Fanny—what about her?"

"I have almost made up my mind to resign my trusteeship. It seems mamma is determined to marry Lord Botherick. As her guardian I can't and don't give my approval. I loathe this marriage. But I dare not, by my refusal, rob your sister of half her fortune. So I am going to resign. Fanny must go her own gait, as you call it."

"Well, well, well!" Billy frowned at her in stern disapproval. "I must say I thought you had more character than that, Penelope. So poor old Fanny is to be sacrificed on the altar of Moloch, and you are arraying yourself in purple and fine linen for the tragedy—you, her guide, her prop, her cashier and step-daughter!"

Penelope's gray eyes flashed. "You know there is nothing I would not do to save her. But mamma is so wickedly headstrong."

"She surely is. Put on the curb and she'll take the bit in her teeth; she'll gallop to perdition and enjoy it."

"And," said Penelope in despair, "Lord Botherick, I suppose, will pursue her all the more relentlessly when he knows that Fanny's income won't be cut in half. He is only after her money, of course."

Billy held up a plump hand in mild remonstrance.

"Oh, I wouldn't say that if I were you. Let us be fair. Botherick is a gentleman, and he certainly does imagine himself in love with my sister. But he and Fanny are cut too much after the same pattern. They are both spendthrifts; they are both flirts. They won't drive well in double harness. They'll have a splendid mad gallop while the running is smooth. But sooner or later one or the other will get restive, kick over the traces, and they will go smash into the divorce court."

Penelope shuddered. "The divorce

court!" she echoed dismally. "Oh, dear!"

"Now you are fond of Fanny, aren't you?"

"I adore her."

"You would sacrifice something to save her?" continued Billy, feeling his way cautiously.

"You know I would."

"Even yourself?"

"Yes."

"And your pride?"

"What has pride to do with it?" asked Penelope scornfully.

"Right! Now listen to me. I'm going to give you food for thought. It is strong meat, so I'll dole it out to you in courses. Number one: Fanny isn't actually engaged to Lord Botherick."

"Not engaged!" Penelope's heart beat wildly. And artful Fanny had never told her that!

"True as you're living. He promised his mamma he wouldn't propose before he returned to his happy home."

"How thoughtful of his mother!"

"Second course, an appetizing morsel worth lingering over: Flirtatious Algy has a whole week on shipboard to get into mischief."

"Fanny will see that he doesn't."

"Aha, but wait. We have come to the third course, the *pièce de résistance*: Supposing we could find someone to allure him away from her? An antidote, a counter-irritant? Don't interrupt now—I am quoting Joshua Harmon's very words. It is his remedy, not mine."

"Then Joshua Harmon must be out of his senses."

"Fourth course, to be fletcherized furiously: Supposing that you—that you find this counter-irritant?"

Billy, appalled at the daredevil wildness of the suggestion, sat huddled in his chair, not daring to look at her. He was prepared for heroics and lofty sounding phrases of bitterest scorn. Instead of that, Penelope was laughing—the first really spontaneous, reckless laughter he ever heard from her lips.

"Heaven be praised!" he cried fervently. "You have a sense of humor, after all. I've hunted so diligently and despondently for that funnybone. Di-

vine creature, I wasn't quite sure you could digest my cookery until that blessed laughter came. But laughter, Penelope, helps digestion wonderfully. Now then, sip this ambrosial nectar for dessert. It is bitter sweet. It tastes queer at first. It has a good deal of *sauce piquante*. You must be that counter-irritant."

Billy hurled the last words at her with a brave air of abandon. She was in a pliant mood, and the laughter had encouraged him wonderfully, but if the laughter had become hysterical he would not have been astonished. But he had actually brought his miracle to pass. Penelope, Embodiment of Conscience, who had so often strained at a gnat, was swallowing the camel at one gulp.

She no longer laughed, it is true. She looked at him with the rapt sternness of a martyr who faces without flinching torturing flames.

When she spoke it was dreamily, as if listening to an inner voice mystically pointing out to her the thorny but clear path of duty.

"To lay siege to that false heart, to fight for it fiercely but cunningly, to hold at last the flabby organ quivering in one's palm—then to crush it, to fling it away contemptuously. It would be an exquisite revenge."

"And Fanny saved," said Billy, supernaturally grave. "Don't forget that—that Fanny's saved."

"And Fanny saved!" echoed Penelope fervently.

"Then you'll do it?" Billy caught her hand.

"No."

"You can and you will," said Billy firmly.

"I couldn't. It's impossible. I am not dashing and adept like Fanny," she faltered, looking at him in piteous appeal. "Besides, I shouldn't know how."

"I will teach you how," promised Billy.

"And I should despise myself. You would despise me."

"Despise you! I should think it noble of you."

"And I shouldn't know how," said Penelope, again very piteously. "No,

I can't do it, Billy—not even to save Fanny. Even she has no right to demand that sacrifice from me. And even if I should try, I should fail."

"In the bright lexicon of youth there is no such word as fail. Besides, I'm going to give you lots of tips."

And Penelope again protested and pleaded, but, strange to relate, she listened.

XIV

"ALGY, dear, people are looking!"

Fanny deftly escaped Algy's embrace and laughed. But if Algy had noticed, she was frowning.

"Let 'em!" cried the unrepentant Algy. "They will see a jolly good-looking couple idyllically in love."

"But, Bother dear, in a hotel parlor! It is almost as bad as one of your 'Arrys and 'Arriets spooning shamelessly on Richmond Heath. And at such an hour! You ought not to have come so early—really."

Fanny took out her vanity box and her fingers fluttered at her hair.

"The earlier the hour, the better the deed," retorted Algy complacently. "Besides, you delicious Fanny, there are no clocks in lovers' land. And if you only knew how I paced the floor this morning counting the minutes before I dared call!"

"Illogical boy! Are you so very blissfully in love, Algy?" demanded Fanny, her head on one side.

"Blissfully," murmured Algy, and frowned fiercely at a luckless spinster who had intruded into his paradise. "If I were a king," he whispered, "I'd have guards with sharp bayonets to repel all the horrible people who are always looking when they shouldn't and forget the first lesson every small brother should learn—two is company and three none. What would you, Fanny, do if you were a queen?"

"If I were queen," said Fanny discontentedly, "I'd command your inconsiderate mamma to cable her consent. I'd like to be going across seas to her on a beautiful white yacht where we should be all alone, and not on a crowded

ocean liner where people are always prying and gossiping—not as Mrs. Yard, the designing widow. Oh, *do* you think your mother will despise me as a designing widow, Algy? Sometimes I wish so fervently I weren't a widow. People do think them dangerous, you know."

"That precious dimple will disarm her. Just one adorable crooked smile will send her prejudices to the dickens."

"I wonder?" said Fanny, wrinkling up her forehead. "Your mother is not in love with me as you are, foolish boy. And you confess to her prejudices."

"Oh, all maters are prejudiced against daughters-in-law. It will be right as rain; you'll see."

"I hope so," said Fanny soberly. "But the thought of your mother frightens me. Are you quite sure you love me very much, Algy?"

"What a silly question! You know if I asked you that you'd be no end angry."

Fanny smiled, but did not accept his challenge.

"You really must go now. I've such a lot to do. Then there's Penelope sulking at the Martha Washington. I suppose I ought to see her, but she is so tiresome and I dread it."

"Why don't you send me as emissary? You have no idea how fascinating I would be. I would make her wish that I was going to be something more to her than a stepfather."

"Six feet of British conceit, do you think no woman can resist you?"

"Five feet of Yankee coquetry, kiss me."

"Before that spinster, certainly not."

"She's not looking now."

"Well, a cautious, silent one!"

But Fanny struggled in his arms.

"Oh, Bother dear, *not* the spinster—the other one. Oh, Algy, don't you see? It's your aunt; it's Mrs. Loudon!"

And Mrs. Loudon had both seen and heard. She did not, however, show the frosty displeasure they had expected. She sailed down on them beaming.

"Indiscreet children! Blind ostriches! Because your silly heads are close together billing and cooing, do you forget there are always people who look?"

Algy winked at Fanny. "Apparently there are, aunt."

"However, I forgive you the compromising situation this time," continued Mrs. Loudon, with a good-natured tolerance that Fanny thought ominous.

"Compromising, aunt!" expostulated Algy. "When we are practically engaged?"

"No, *no*, you are not," Mrs. Loudon's good nature was a thin veneer, after all, it seemed. "In my day, Fanny, giddy young things as we were, we never permitted even a chaste embrace before the cavalier had proposed on his knees."

"Other days, other customs," said Algy complacently, twisting his yellow mustache. But Fanny had the grace to blush.

"Algy is so impetuous," she murmured.

"And inconsiderate, too," added Mrs. Loudon, looking at her nephew severely. "Don't think I'm blaming *you*, my dear; I sympathize with *you*."

Fanny cast down her eyes. "Thank you, dear Mrs. Loudon," she said gratefully.

"And why this unexpected visit, aunt?" demanded Algy, looking at his watch.

"I want to talk to Fanny, my rude nephew; and don't think I intend to take the hint you're giving me."

Fanny looked at Algy's aunt somewhat anxiously. More than once Algy had confided to her that she was a deep one.

"I suppose you are going to lecture us, aunt," grumbled Algy. "But let me warn you, it will be precious little use."

"Supposing I am resigned to the inevitable, and beginning to realize how useless it is to try to rescue blind lovers lost in the maze—that they don't want to be rescued, and are angry if one attempts it?"

"There's wisdom for aunty!" cried Algy admiringly. "All pure gold. I always told Fanny that those darling little curls at the nape of your neck belied a stony exterior—that in your heart of hearts you dearly loved a lover."

The trouble is, we ought to have taken you into our confidence before. However, we do so now. So you have come to give us your blessing! You are going to cable the mater that my Fanny is the delightfulest, the most bewitching little duck in the world."

"I am," asserted Mrs. Loudon stoutly, "on one condition."

Fanny nodded sagely to herself. She had not the simple faith in Mrs. Loudon's protestations that Algy seemed to have. The change of front was too startlingly abrupt to deceive her.

"I say, that's ripping!" cried Algy with boyish enthusiasm. "Aunt, trot out the condition."

"It is that I am not to go to England, Algy," said Fanny quietly. "Mrs. Loudon thinks it's improper."

"Oh, not exactly improper, dear, but perhaps a little undignified. Won't it prejudice Algernon's mother against you?"

"Please understand, Mrs. Loudon, I made my plans long before—"

"Of course you did," interrupted Algy angrily. "And how the dickens, aunt, is my mother to know whether she will like Fanny for a daughter or not if she never sees her?"

"Fanny could come on a later boat. When once you have broken the news—"

"She could, but she won't."

"At least, you need not be her fellow passenger!"

"I need not be, but I will," said Algy obstinately.

Mrs. Loudon was fast losing her temper. He was too difficult. She appealed to Fanny.

"Surely you will be reasonable, dear. When I tell you I have come—"

"To bury our loves, not to praise 'em," interrupted rude Algy. "You don't deceive me; I'm too old a bird, aunt."

"Of course," cried Mrs. Loudon contemptuously, appealing to Fanny again, "a mere man cannot be expected to understand that some situations are impossible. They are too selfish and think only of their own pleasure. Now, Fanny, let me tell you plainly that my sister Susan is very conventional. If

you and Algy sail together, what will she think? That this love affair of his is really serious? Certainly not. She will think it just a steamboat flirtation. Oh, he may protest until he is black in the face, but will he convince her? I think not. And she will never forgive you—never. You will have taken the first wrong step, my dear, and it is the first step that counts. She may even accuse you of being—"

"A designing widow—I know." Fanny's green eyes were very bright and hard.

"Bally rot!" Algy paced to and fro, directing furious kicks at a hassock, as he passed it.

"On the contrary," continued Mrs. Loudon, encouraged by this confession, "if you sail to England independently of him, I am your ally and not your enemy."

"Fanny," commanded Algy, "I forbid you to listen to this sophistry, this Machiavellian appeal."

"Please go on, Mrs. Loudon; I am listening," said Fanny in a low voice.

"And when once I am convinced that you are really in love with one another—"

"Oh, Mrs. Loudon!" exclaimed Fanny reproachfully. "You don't doubt *that*?"

Algy laughed mirthlessly. "She is going to demand a year's probation. My hat, don't I know it?"

"I am not so unreasonable." Algy's diplomatic aunt was sure of her ground now, and could afford to smile tolerantly on her sulky nephew. "I do not ask Fanny to disarrange her plans. My suggestion is this: When she arrives in London she shall go to Claridge's. In due time my sister Susan will call on her there in the conventional manner."

"How can we be sure she will?" demanded Algy, looking suspiciously at his aunt, his hands in his pockets.

"Because I shall write asking her to do so."

"And what do you call 'due time,' may I ask?"

"I told you just now," replied Mrs. Loudon patiently. "When once I am convinced you are really in love with each other."

"And how long will it take to convince you?"

"A month or so."

"Why not wait until I'm Prime Minister? Why not wait till I am married, and am a widower?"

"Do be sensible, Algernon."

"Fanny, I appeal to you. Am I not reasonable?"

"Really, I am not quite clear as to how you wish to dispose of me, Mrs. Loudon." Fanny smiled maliciously, but her deference was perfect.

"Dispose of you; that's the word!" fumed Algy.

"I am simply asking you, Fanny—if you *must* go to England—not to go on the same boat as my nephew."

"Supposing, for the sake of argument, we agree to that, what is the *quid pro quo*?" questioned Algy warily.

"I have already told you. I am to use my influence with your mother to have her approve of Fanny—I mean the match. Is it a bargain?"

"Dear Mrs. Loudon, pray understand there is no bargain so far as I am concerned. I am not a piece of *bric-à-brac* to be haggled over." Fanny's manner was most gracious, but the green eyes were flashing ominously.

Algy sent the hassock spinning across the room.

"I say amen to that. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush any day. We hurl defiance at our aunt."

"Very well," said Mrs. Loudon coldly. "If you prefer to be called—"

"No," cried Fanny angrily, "I have no intention whatever of being called a designing widow. You may rest assured, Mrs. Loudon, that Lord Botherick and myself will not be fellow passengers on the *Prinz Wilhelm*."

"Fanny!" implored Algy. "Keep cool. Don't let her goad you into saying foolish things that you'll regret presently. Don't you see you are playing into her hands?"

Mrs. Loudon put on an air of hypocritical concern.

"Fanny knows that I am disinterested. I was sure, my dear, when once I pointed out the impropriety—"

"Pardon me, dear Mrs. Loudon,"

said Fanny suavely; "perhaps you should know that I had already positively decided not to go to England with your nephew."

"The deuce you had!" Algy stared. Mrs. Loudon sternly repressed her satisfaction.

"You mean you are not going to England at all?"

Fanny tilted her charming nose disdainfully.

"Had you thought of bribing me not to go, Mrs. Loudon?"

Algy's aunt was at once mortified at the snubbing—Fanny was so deftly administering to her, and secretly gratified at the resentment she had planted in Fanny's breast by the innuendoes she had deliberately made.

Algy was furious, alike at his aunt's interference and at the secretiveness of Fanny.

"But you can't prevent me, Fanny, from taking passage on any boat I choose."

"But I can refuse to tell you the boat by which I intend to sail," retorted Fanny with spirit.

"And I refuse to submit to the petticoat rule of Mrs. Grundy."

"Then Mrs. Grundy has come in the nick of time," said Algy's aunt. "If my nephew can so selfishly compromise you, my dear, I doubt if he can love you in the nobler way."

Mrs. Loudon cast her eyes to the ceiling, overjoyed at her success in exasperating both her nephew and Fanny.

"If," he cried angrily, "I meekly submitted to this tyranny and was indifferent to the separation, it would mean surely that I did *not* love Fanny."

"Love," Fanny retorted with a primness that made Mrs. Loudon wonder, "is patient; love is long suffering and kind."

"Oh, if you are going to be Biblical—" Mrs. Loudon hastened to pour oil on the flames.

"A week's separation will be a test," she said softly. "It will give you both time to reflect, Algernon."

"If a week's separation can play havoc with Fanny's unstable affections—"

Algy walked over to the window, and stared moodily out into the street.

"How dare you call my affections unstable? Shall I remind you that people who live in glass houses—" Fanny's indignation choked her.

"Perhaps," suggested his aunt sarcastically, "Algy may find another Mazie on board to help him pass the time away."

Even she quailed at the ferocity of her nephew's glare. She rose hastily. She had accomplished enough mischief this morning, and she hoped they might quarrel the more fatally, if she were not there to embarrass them.

"Well, chicks, I must be going. Dear Algy, don't look so sulky. A week is not an eternity. I suppose you won't mind telling *me* your boat, Fanny?"

"Oh, certainly not," said Fanny loftily—"if you can guarantee that I shall not be persecuted by your relatives."

"I am ashamed that a nephew of mine should have so little delicacy. Be firm, my dear. You'll bring him to terms. Telephone me the name of the boat, won't you?"

"Oh, yes," said Fanny carelessly.

"Then good-bye for the present. I may be on the dock to wish you *bon voyage*. But my gout, you know. Good-bye."

Exulting in the tragic possibilities of the quarrel she had so cleverly fanned, and quite sure that it would break forth with renewed violence, Mrs. Loudon took her departure. Algy was too incensed to be polite and see her to her carriage. He still stood at the window, gnawing his mustache.

Fanny tiptoed to the door, and watched the retreat of Algy's aunt smiling wickedly. She shut the door very softly. Then, eyebrows roguishly quizzical, a finger on her lips, she stood there demurely expectant, waiting for the floodgate of his wrath to open.

But he affected to ignore her presence. Fanny flung a pillow at him, and then another.

"Look at me, my Algy-palgy!"

Algy looked. Fanny was dancing a *pas seul* with shocking abandonment. Algy's eyes opened wide, and then he winked.

"I say, you are a deep one!" He caught her about the waist. "Tell me it is all a trick!"

"Didn't I play up to aunty beautifully? But, dense British man, *you* really and truly quarreled."

"Then it is a trick—what?"

"Certainly not."

Algy ruffled his feathers again.

"Do you mean to tell me that you have actually engaged passage on another boat and not said one word to me?"

"That part," Fanny confessed shamelessly, "was a tiny weeny fib. I simply had to tell it to her in self-defense. I couldn't let her think that I am a designing widow, Algy."

"But you aren't going to be so cruel and so ridiculously proper as to insist on our taking different boats?"

"It will be a fearful ordeal, I know. But, Bother dear," she said coaxingly, "you surely can trust *me* for one little short week?"

"Why do you emphasize the pronoun? Are you inferring you can't trust *me*?"

"With all my heart. Won't you be as generous?"

"I suppose I must be," he grumbled.

"Then each trusts the other implicitly?"

"Implicitly, of course."

"Besides, it isn't as if we couldn't keep an eye on each other."

"What on earth do you mean? You aren't going to hire a detective to spy on me, I hope?"

"Listen, unimaginative man; I have a delightful surprise for you. Do you know that the *Cynthia* and the *Asiatic* sail tomorrow morning at the same hour? For days and days they will be in touch with each other."

"By Jove, you mean by wireless telegraphy!" cried Algy delightedly.

"Yes. Heaven bless the clever head of Mr. Marconi!"

"Capital! It will be no end jolly. It will be as good as a telephone—what? Which boat do you choose?"

"I think I'll take the *Cynthia*. It sounds more feminine."

"Right! Then I return on my old boat. I came over on her, you know."

"And shall you take the name Scarlett again?"

"Why not? It will save notoriety. Shall I attend to the bookings?"

"I wish you would. I shall be fearfully busy if I'm to be off tomorrow. And get a room for my maid as near mine as you can."

When Algy had gone downtown, Fanny telephoned Mrs. Loudon that she was to sail on the *Cynthia* the next morning at eleven, and that Algy would sail on the *Asiatic* at the same hour.

Mrs. Loudon, gloating in the success of her strategy, telephoned the good news to Billy.

And Billy telephoned Penelope that he had engaged staterooms for herself and her maid on the *Asiatic*.

But Billy did not say that Fanny would sail on the *Cynthia*.

XV

WITH adjectives and adverbs too luridly improper to stain the virginal whiteness of this paper, Algy, sulking in a corner seat of the *Asiatic's* smoking room, assaulted the character of his respectable aunt.

He was lonely, and he was bored.

It was too early in the day for a whiskey and soda, and quite too absurdly early in the voyage, he decided, to send loving greetings to Fanny.

He yawned again and again, and composed himself for a nap.

But the Fates had no intention whatever of allowing him to waste golden moments in brutish slumber this morning. In fact, at that moment they were rather busily engaged in shaping his destiny. One of them prepared to loosen the cords that bound him to the past. Another was about to tie the knot firmly to the future. The third Fate appeared boldly in the flesh—in the shape of Biggs, a steward.

"Sorry to disturb you, Mr. Scarlett," said the obsequious steward.

Algy scowled.

"Perhaps you remember me, sir," said Mr. Biggs, smiling deferentially. "I was your steward when you came over."

"Well, my good Biggs," said Algy

crossly, "does that warrant your waking me up? Did I forget to tip you?"

"Oh, no, sir. But if you please, sir, I've an urgent message for you."

"A wireless, you mean?"

"No, sir; a young lady."

"Young lady! You are chattering incoherently, my man. Run away and make your beds and things, there's a good fellow."

"Very good, sir," agreed Biggs, but he did not run away to make his beds.

"The young lady is in great trouble. It seems she has lost her ma."

"Idiot! I assure you, I am not her ma," cried Algy, exasperated. "Nor am I her pa. I am not even her nurse."

"No, sir, of course not." Biggs smiled behind his palm. "She said perhaps you would remember her as the young lady typist."

"I think not," yawned Algy. "No young lady typists on my visiting list. It's some other Johnny you're after, steward. Once more, will you please go to the devil and take the young lady typist with you?"

"Very good, sir," answered the imperturbable and stolid Biggs. "She said she chatted with you once in a solicitor's office in New York about your friend Lord Botherick."

"I say!" Algy sat up wide awake now. "Do you know her name?"

Mr. Biggs shook his head.

"Has she a haughty Lady Vere de Vere manner? And has she jolly red hair, and a pair of gray eyes that could bowl you over like ninepins, steward, if they didn't glare at you like a Medusa's?"

"I don't think I have the pleasure of knowing Miss Medusa, sir. But she has auburn hair, sir, and fetching gray eyes. And they don't glare now, sir. The young lady is rather weepy at present."

It was the I. P.! It was Penelope! But how she had lost her mother Algy did not understand.

"You are sure it's me she's after?"

"Quite sure, sir. She says she saw you come aboard, and she pointed you out to me through that deck porthole yonder on the starboard side."

"I'm damned!"

Algy was in a quandary. Should he declare himself her arch-enemy—the dissipated, degenerate Lord Botherick? If he did so, she would assuredly cut him, and on the spot. How then could he be of service to her? And the steward had said she was in great distress. Besides, his curiosity was aroused. Certainly, before he declared himself, he must know how she had made the extraordinary mistake of being on the *Asiatic* instead of the *Cynthia* with her mother.

"Lead on, steward." He smoothed his hair at the mirror and adjusted his necktie. "The knight errant will go to the rescue of the distressed young lady who has lost her ma."

"Quite so, sir. She is in the writing room."

Penelope, as Algy remembered her in Joshua Harmon's office, in stiffly starched shirtwaist and black skirt, had not been unpleasing. But this young Diana, exquisitely appareled in an amethyst gown, smiling at him so wistfully and so doubtfully, so nearly on the verge of tears, made the susceptible heart of Algy give a great jump. He stared at her with an astonishment frankly naïve.

"Good morning, Miss Yard. This is a delightful surprise." He shook a limp and dejected hand. "The steward tells me that you have lost your ma—ahem—that you cannot find your mother."

"Yes, I am afraid she is not aboard." Penelope laughed hysterically. "I am in an awful predicament, Mr. Scarlett."

"Whew! It is a jolly fix."

The words sounded flippant enough, but Algy's concern was markedly solemn.

"And when I saw you," continued Penelope nervously, "I remembered you were a friend of Lord Botherick, and I thought perhaps you could tell me—"

Not a glimmer of intelligence gleaned in Algy's blue eyes.

"Yes, you thought I could tell you?" he said encouragingly.

"If Lord Botherick is on board or not," continued Penelope, tugging frantically at her glove.

Algy gravely consulted a passenger list that lay on the table.

"He doesn't seem to be down here," he declared cautiously after a deliberate search.

"No, he wouldn't be on the list. He would be too ashamed perhaps."

"Ashamed! And why ashamed, Miss Yard?"

"Forgive me; I forget he is your friend. But he must be lurking aboard somewhere. I have every reason to know that. And yet when I asked the purser just now, he refused either to affirm or deny the fact. He said, however, that you would know."

"But supposing," said Algy guardedly, "Lord Botherick is aboard, how will that fact help us to find out if your mother is or not?"

Penelope tugged violently at her glove. The seam of the forefinger gave way. She tossed that glove on the lounge and attacked its fellow.

"Because Lord Botherick is interested—because he has pursued my mother with obnoxious attentions."

"Perhaps," said Algy grimly, "because these attentions were obnoxious, your mother decided at the last moment not to be Lord Botherick's fellow passenger. But in that case I should have thought she would have told you."

"But," stammered Penelope, her agitation momentarily increasing, "you see, my mother knew I did not approve of the engagement."

"Oh, there was an engagement, was there?" Algy lifted his eyebrows. "Then how could Lord Botherick's attentions be obnoxious if—"

"Mamma and I differed about the engagement, Mr. Scarlett."

"Then the attentions of Lord Botherick were obnoxious only to you?"

"I suppose so," admitted Penelope hurriedly. "But at the last moment I made up my mind to—to—"

"Patch up the quarrel? That was good of you."

"No, not exactly," replied Penelope honestly. "But the family skeleton can't interest you, Mr. Scarlett."

"On the contrary," protested Algy gravely, "family skeletons are my hobby."

"This family skeleton, I suppose, is the degenerate, dissipated English peer, Lord Botherick?"

"Will you please find out if he's on this ship?" said Penelope desperately. "Then I can question him about mamma. I shall be deeply grateful."

"I'll pry about for the skeleton—don't worry—and drag it back to you, if I find it, by its bony vertebrae."

Algy slowly descended the companionway in the direction of the purser's office. But he did not go into that office. Once out of Penelope's sight, he stepped out on the saloon deck and lighted a cigarette. He wished to think matters over.

What earthly reason had prompted the I. P. to thrust her unwelcome presence on them? Certainly not because she was sympathetic—had she not a moment ago scornfully expressed her bitter disapproval? She had come to make herself disagreeable—to use her influence in breaking up the love affair between Fanny and himself. In that case she was his enemy. If so, why should he betray his hand, since all is fair in love and war?

Besides, the I. P. was in distress. Was it not his manifest duty to comfort and console her? How could he do that if he declared himself her enemy? Then what a glorious opportunity to undermine her prejudices! When once he had won her confidence and respect—when once she had grown—not exactly fond of him, but to like him—he would reveal his identity as her prospective stepfather.

But Fanny? Algy tossed his cigarette thoughtfully over the rail. What would she say? Would she approve? Poor, lonely, heartsick Fanny disconsolately sighing for her Algy! Could he conscientiously console this charming Jill, who had popped so unexpectedly across his path, remembering that Fanny had no Jack to console her? Supposing she were jealous! But that was absurd. Penelope's disapproval had at once irritated and grieved her. Then if Algy cunningly changed disapproval into hearty approval, Fanny would be grateful, not jealous. Still, to be on the safe side, he resolved to throw the responsibility of

his future maneuvers on Fanny's shoulders.

He went to the purser's office and cautioned that official that he wished to be known on the ship as Mr. Scarlett. Then he wrote out this marconigram:

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
11:30 A.M. Wednesday.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,

S.S. *Cynthia*:

Guess who's here. The I. P. Doesn't know me as B. Must I antagonize as B, or shall I disarm prejudice as X.Y.Z? Advise. Address me Scarlett.

ALGY.

Blithe was the heart of Algy and smiling his face when he went up the companionway again, two steps at a time, to rejoin the damsel in distress. He trusted Fanny. He was quite sure what her advice would be. He almost regretted wasting money on the superfluous inquiry.

If Fanny's answer were favorable, adventures beckoned enticingly. And this alluring creature, clad in the shining panoply of Venus, so appealing in her distress, was everything that he could wish as a partner in the coming adventures. The heart of Algy then was lifted up in praise and thanksgiving as he joined Penelope again in the writing room.

"I am awfully sorry, but I am afraid your mother is certainly not here."

"And Lord Botherick?"

Algy shrugged his shoulders. He wished to be truthful if it were possible.

"Oh, this is terrible!" Penelope bit her lips to keep back the tears. "I suppose he heard mamma at the last moment had changed her mind."

"Surely, if you detest him so, you are well rid of him!"

"Yes, of course. But think of my embarrassment. I am quite alone and helpless. Only my maid. It is too awful!"

"I'm here at least; the days will pass like wildfire—you'll see. An ocean voyage, you know, isn't so bad if one has good company."

"But there isn't *any* company." Penelope was decidedly in the dumps.

"Why, there's me."

Penelope smiled through her tears. "You are very kind," she murmured.

"I'll look after you with all my might. We'll have long promenades and cheerful talks, and then there'll be lots of time for delicious naps, you know. And we can play games—shuffleboard and that sort of thing; and I'll try to rout up two decent people for bridge, if you like."

"I'm afraid I shall not be very good company. But I'll try hard not to bore you," said Penelope bravely.

"Bore me? Rather not! I'm so awfully glad to be of service. We shall make a capital team. Now what do you say to a brisk constitutional before luncheon?"

"I should love it. But first I must send this wireless to my mother's brother. I am extremely provoked with him. Surely he should have known that his sister was not to sail."

"Perhaps she missed the boat? Shall I send your message?"

"Thank you."

Algy looked thoughtfully at the envelope Penelope gave him.

"You are anxious, of course, to know whether she did or not."

"Yes. And whether Lord Botherick is with her, Mr. Scarlett."

"I see," said Algy, even more thoughtfully.

XVI

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
6:30 P.M. Wednesday.

SCARLETT,

S.S. *Asiatic*:

Bother I. P. Feeling very unhappy. Supremely indifferent whether B. or X.Y.Z.

FANNY.

That was Fanny's answer, and a disconcerting and perplexing answer it was!

"Feeling most unhappy!"

He smoked furiously and the sparks flew from his pipe. He was a brute. Poor little Fanny! So she was crying her heart out for him? Perhaps at that very moment she was leaning against the rail, looking out wistfully into the night, thinking of him, too, as being unhappy and lonely. And he hadn't been very unhappy. It shocked him that he had missed her so little.

"Bother the I. P.!"

Bother the I. P.! Irritation spoke plainly there. What business was it of his if the I. P. was on the deck of the *Asiatic* or of the *Cynthia*? There was a vitality and *timbre* in the curt message that made him wince.

"Supremely indifferent whether B. or X.Y.Z."

Confound it! Then she was jealous! What a nuisance, and how petty and unreasonable!

He sighed lugubriously. Fanny's logic was only too clear. I am unhappy, and therefore because you love me you will be unhappy. I have quarreled with Penelope, and you are the cause. Therefore, I shall expect you to take my side and espouse my quarrel.

Cut the I. P.; ignore her. That, in short, seemed the gist of Fanny's wireless.

But it was inconsiderate not to have expressed her wishes earlier in the day. Because he had been sure of her answer, he had been diligently kind and persistently consoling. He had arranged that she should sit next to him at table; he had seen that her steamer chair was placed next to his in a sheltered corner of the deck. Why, he had even promised her that he would join her presently in that secluded corner. It was an exasperating situation. How could he cruelly and rudely turn front at a moment's notice—just when he was beginning to cheer her up? And they were becoming so jolly and friendly. Well, he would let her down as gently as possible.

He flung himself heavily into a steamer chair next to hers, pulled the rug over his knees, his cap down to his ears, and huddled up in his greatcoat.

"Beastly night," he said gruffly.

Penelope looked at him wonderingly.

"Why, it's a glorious night," she murmured. "Oh, that wild sky, and the mysterious troubled sea, sometimes so somber and then so vividly alive! Look, now the clouds are rent apart. What a wonderful moon! See how passionately it caresses the sea!"

Algy smiled.

"Don't think me rude, but I say, you

know, the passionate caress! Somehow I hadn't thought you could be sentimental."

"Tonight," said Penelope purposely, "I think I should like to forget the cold facts that science cruelly teaches us. I should like to think tonight that this glorious moon is not simply so many molecules and atoms."

Algy looked at her in alarm. This romantic mood was dangerous—decidedly dangerous. It must be squelched and at once. He must begin the ruthless process of letting her down gently. If he did not, he was lost.

"On the weather side it's beastly," he insisted doggedly.

He drew his head into the upturned collar of his greatcoat like a sulking turtle.

Penelope touched the sleeve of his coat.

"If you had not neglected me so long, Mr. Scarlett, smoking on the bad side of the boat, you wouldn't have got so wet."

"Thought you wouldn't like my pipe," growled Algy.

"Oh, I rather like a pipe."

Penelope fibbed with an alacrity that did not so much shock as surprise her.

"Very good of you, I'm sure. But smoking isn't allowed on this end of the promenade deck."

Penelope meekly subsided. She was hurt at his brusqueness, but especially was she furious that she did feel hurt. She should have remembered that men are irrational creatures—moody and unstable as water. But somehow, the reflection did not satisfy her as it so often had done.

"Perhaps you are not feeling well," she ventured presently.

"Seasick, you mean? I am never seasick."

"Please don't bore yourself trying to amuse me," said Penelope with a disarming humility.

"Glad to amuse you, I'm sure."

"I was referring to a psychological rather than a pathological condition when I asked you if you were not well."

"Eh?"

"You are in trouble, I am afraid. I'm sorry, Mr. Scarlett."

"Thanks awfully."

"I can sympathize with you because life is so often perplexing to me. I suppose everyone who takes life seriously is depressed at times."

Again Algy chuckled silently. He rather enjoyed playing the part of one nursing a secret sorrow. It was so novel.

"Yes, we all have our troubles," he hinted darkly.

"But don't dwell on them," counseled Penelope earnestly. "Try to seize the hour of happiness when it comes, Mr. Scarlett."

"Are you happy then?" he asked, forgetting for the moment his determination to snub her.

"Very," acknowledged Penelope frankly. "Every care seems to have slipped from my shoulders. I want so much to enjoy these days of delicious rest. Only a few hours ago I was facing a disagreeable duty. Ah, it is a relief to know that I am reprieved."

"Great heavens! What beastly duty could confront you on an ocean liner?" asked Algy, downright curious.

"There is none now at any rate." Penelope sighed luxuriously.

"Do tell me. Won't you?"

"To a stranger? Impossible."

"I thought we were going to be friends."

"I never," confessed candid Penelope, "have had a man for a friend, Mr. Scarlett."

"Men," he retorted with enthusiasm, "make the best sort of friends. Men aren't sly like women. Men are honest and loyal like faithful dogs. You can trust men, you know. They mean what they say."

Algy bit his lip. That was hardly the truth, and the conversation was again drifting into a dangerously personal channel, as it had a dozen times that day.

"Can one?" asked Penelope pensively. "I wonder?"

"I mean, of course, when you know them well. No doubt you are quite right, Miss Yard, not to confide in strangers."

How difficult men were! But fascinating, too. She had hitherto always considered them bovine creatures, who eat and drink more than is good for them. But this handsome young god at her side seemed to have a tantalizingly complex personality. Surely he had tasted the bitter cup of sorrow. She longed to comfort him. She had never felt such a desire before, and it thrilled her to realize that she could feel such a desire.

Conversation languished. Algy felt a glow of virtuous approval. Again he had snubbed the I. P. He was letting her down with a series of rude jolts. It was only a matter of perseverance. She would detest him before long.

He began to compose in his mind a wireless for Fanny—a fervent and lover-like greeting. That was it. He must keep his thoughts vigilantly on Fanny. He closed his eyes, dwelling on the many delightful flirtatious hours he had spent in her company.

But he was not an imaginative young man, and Penelope's presence was disconcerting. Without moving his head he looked at her askance.

A faint smile made her lips very sweet. How in the world could Fanny have called her hard and aggressive? And how meekly she was taking her snubbing! Fanny would have spit and scratched. And it was a blessed relief to have a woman next to one who didn't prattle all the time. Again his resolutions began to totter.

"Of course," he said, bending toward her a little nearer than was necessary for his voice to carry, "on shipboard one learns to know people quickly; one becomes the stanchest of friends in an astonishingly short time. On land one sees a woman in a merely superficial manner—a call of five minutes perhaps, once a week. Here we are thrown hours together."

"Yes," agreed Penelope pensively.

"One gets down at the heart of things at sea," continued Algy, absorbed in his topic. "One learns really to know people. If they are worth while, one soon finds out. If they are not, one finds that out, too."

"A wireless for you, Miss Yard, and one for you, Lord Botherick."

Algy transfixed with a stern and glassy eye the blundering purser who had intruded. But Penelope, holding her wireless to the feeble electric light, was already absorbed in its contents.

The purser nodded toward the unconscious Penelope and winked.

"Didn't I warn you, Mr. Purser," said Algy angrily, when they had retreated to a safe distance, "that I am not Lord Botherick during this voyage?"

"Quite so," replied the purser, looking at Algy unmoved. "But if you please, sir, you will see that this message is addressed to you as Lord Botherick. That is why I have brought it to you myself. The operator thought there was a mistake. Your two names are rather confusing."

"Very well," said Algy shortly, "but remember next time, please."

He tore open the envelope. If Fanny's previous message had left him dangling on the fence, he was thrown rudely into the ditch now. Nothing could be more explicit.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
7:10 P.M. Wednesday.

BOTHERICK,
S.S. *Asiatic*:

Most awfully miserable. Decided it wicked to deceive I. P. Better confess you are B. immediately.

FANNY.

So Fanny had held the sword of Damocles suspended over his luckless head only to bring it down at last with one fell whack! And a moment ago he had been telling Penelope that they were to be great friends.

"I hope yours isn't bad news, Mr. Scarlett," Penelope stood at his side. "You look very serious."

"It is serious," he said ruefully. "I hope yours is not?"

"It is from my mother. She is on the *Cynthia* it seems. Isn't it an absurd *contretemps*?"

Algy looked at her in amazement. Only a few hours ago she called the *contretemps* a tragedy. Now she was laughing.

"Very. And—and Lord Botherick?" he asked nervously.

"I suppose he's there, too," she answered. "He isn't even mentioned. I am glad, because I can *imagine* that he is *not*. I don't want the thought of him to spoil the pleasure of this voyage."

"I'm rather sorry for that poor beggar," said Algy, looking gloomily out in the darkness. "You are so hard on him. Really he isn't such a bad lot. I was larking, of course, when I painted him with such lurid colors in that solicitor's office."

"And that affair with that Mazie woman?" Penelope asked coldly. "Do you forget that, Mr. Scarlett?"

"I am not likely to, with you to remind me of it every minute," he answered crossly.

She was the suffragette again, the blue stocking, the scornor of men. Well, so much the better. His confession would be less embarrassing if he could keep the suffragette firmly in his mind.

"I am very tactless. I should have remembered he is your friend."

"If you dislike him, you dislike me."

"I can't," declared Penelope gaily.

"Can't what?"

"Dislike you. You have been too kind."

This would never do. There was no use beating about the bush. He must disillusion her at once. He wondered why he dreaded doing that so much—why he dreaded losing her friendship and her respect. He was going to lose both in a moment.

"Another wireless, sir." It was the smiling and ubiquitous purser. "This one followed right on the heels of the other. I thought you looked anxious last time. Wonderful things these modern inventions, sir."

"Wonderful," joyfully agreed Algy as he scanned the good news.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
Wednesday, 8 P.M.

SCARLETT,

S.S. *Asiatic*:

Feeling much less seasick. Doctor extremely kind. Things don't look so blue now. If you haven't told I. P. don't. Flirt with her; do her a world of good.

FANNY.

September, 1911—4

For the second time that day Algy's heart was lifted up in praise and thanksgiving. Generous, delightful Fanny! What a sporting sort she was! How much he loved her! He turned eagerly to Penelope.

"Poof! All my troubles are over. Everything is right as rain!"

"I am glad of that," said Penelope, looking at him thoughtfully.

"Yes, everything is quite all right." Algy lighted a cigarette, and inhaled it with an air of intense relief. "And we won't bother our heads any more about old Botherick and his peccadillos, will we?"

"You receive a great many messages from the *Cynthia*, Mr. Scarlett."

Algy was in too boisterous a good humor to notice how strangely thoughtful Penelope had suddenly become.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Business—fearful bore—but everything's all right now."

"Your correspondent uses a code, I suppose?"

"A code?" he echoed wonderingly.

"When you tore up your wireless a moment ago, this little piece of paper fell right near me. I didn't mean to read what's on it, but I couldn't help seeing the typewritten word—" Penelope held out the recalcitrant slip of paper.

There was one word only, but what a compromising word!

"Flirt!"

XVII

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Wednesday, 10:35 P.M.

WILLIAM MERRICK,
St. Christopher's Club,
New York:

Is Botherick *Asiatic* masquerading Scarlett?
PENELOPE.

St. Christopher's Club,
New York,
Wednesday, 11:50 P.M.

PENELOPE YARD,
S.S. *Asiatic*:
Ask mamma.

BILLY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 8:30 A.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

Good morning mamma. Why *Cynthia* instead *Asiatic*? Embarrassing situation me.
PENELOPE.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
Thursday, 10:15 A.M.

PENELOPE YARD,
S.S. *Asiatic*:

Served you right if you sailed by *Asiatic* to spy and nag. Or was purpose to tell me you approve match?

FANNY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 11 A.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

Decidedly not approve. Is not Botherick passenger *Asiatic*?

PENELOPE.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
Thursday, 11:35 A.M.

PENELOPE YARD,
S.S. *Asiatic*:

Find out.

FANNY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 12:20 P.M.

WILLIAM MERRICK,
St. Christopher's Club,
New York:

Where is Botherick? Insist knowing.

PENELOPE.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 10:40 A.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

Conscientious scruples against flirting with Penelope. Think designation I.P. undignified and cruel.

ALGY.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
Thursday, 1:15 P.M.

SCARLETT,
S.S. *Asiatic*:

Pooh. Wretchedly ill again. Doctor and others attentive. No word love from you. All your sympathy for I.P.

FANNY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 1:40 P.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

Indignant insinuation. Profound sympathy. I—billionaire darling agitated tummy ask doctor for pills. Take rotation blue pink green.

ALGY.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
Thursday, 2:05 P.M.

SCARLETT,
S.S. *Asiatic*:

Doctor laughs at pills. Ship pitching horribly. Waves splashing against porthole drive distracted. Is abomination desolation. Send long comforting wireless or do you grudge expense?

FANNY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 2:40 P.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

Illness probably imagination. Try Christian Science dearest. First relax. Concentrate mind something. Say bulb electric light. Repeat continually am God's child not devil's—am not ill—ship not pitching—splashing wave soothing—do not feel queer—am happy and at peace. Try it sweetheart. Is this wireless expensive enough?

ALGY.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
Thursday, 3:15 P.M.

SCARLETT,

S.S. *Asiatic*:

Brute. Amuse yourself flirting with I.P. Leave me to doctor and misery.

FANNY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 3:17 P.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

Advice monstrous. Am only decent Penelope as prospective stepfather.

ALGY.

St. Christopher's Club,
New York (via Cape Race),
Thursday, 2:30 P.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

Hilarious joke. Penelope sailed *Asiatic* grimly resolved win Botherick's love from you. Penelope bragged intention me. Probably making goo-goo eyes Botherick now.

BILLY.

At sea, S.S. *Cynthia*,
Thursday, 3:35 P.M.

SCARLETT,

S.S. *Asiatic*:

Just received wireless from Billy. I.P. sailed *Asiatic* resolved win your love from me. I.P. bragged purpose to Billy. Conscientious scruples absurd. Flirt. Punish thoroughly.

FANNY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 3:52 P.M.

MRS. THOMAS YARD,
S.S. *Cynthia*:

I.P. duplicity astounding. Will punish.

ALGY.

St. Christopher's Club,
New York, Thursday, 3:35 P.M.

PENELOPE YARD,
S.S. *Asiatic*:

Botherick fellow passenger *Asiatic* lurking under assumed name.

BILLY.

At sea, S.S. *Asiatic*,
Thursday, 4:15 P.M.

WILLIAM MERRICK,
St. Christopher's Club,
New York:
What name?

PENELOPE.

St. Christopher's Club,
New York, Thursday, 6 P.M.

PENELOPE YARD,
S.S. *Asiatic*:
Puzzle find the lord. Diverting pastime for
you.

BILLY.

XVIII

It was Friday morning. Algy was leaning against the rail pretending not to see Penelope. She was seated in her steamer chair, holding a book before her as if reading, glancing furtively at Algy, quite incensed that he was neglecting her.

"Is he thinking of Fanny, or does his conscience already prick him? Of course not; he hasn't any conscience. I wonder if I kicked off my rug? There! Now he'll have to tuck me up."

Algy, however, did not turn his head.

"Steady, ho, Algy, my boy! Fret, my beauty; it will do you good. Who would have thought our demure Quaker had such a temper? But of course she has a temper; her red hair screams that fact. Bang! There goes her book."

For the first time he pretended to see Penelope. He lifted his cap and sauntered by, to Penelope's chagrin.

"Rippin' morning, isn't it?" he said pleasantly.

Penelope, however, was determined to detain him.

"May I trouble you? My rug—"

Algy looked at the rug with interest.

"Charming color, mauve. It matches your frock admirably, and is quite becoming, Miss Yard."

Penelope was piqued that he made no move to pick it up.

"Perhaps it doesn't occur to you, Mr. Scarlett, that a rug is not simply an article of adornment."

"It has. But I noticed you kicked it off just now."

"It slipped off," declared Penelope, furious.

Algy smiled ingratiatingly.

"Are you hinting that I am to tuck you up?"

"If it is not too much trouble."

"Oh, a pleasure." Algy looked at her with concern. "You are shivering."

He touched her hand deliberately. Penelope withdrew it, looking at him with anger.

"I am perfectly warm, thank you."

"Then the rug is an article of adornment. Shall I take it off again?"

"You are facetious this morning, Mr. Scarlett."

"Now that I look at you critically, your eyes seem unnatural bright, and that flush—rather hectic. Really, you look feverish."

"How clever you are at diagnosing people's ailments, Mr. Scarlett!"

"I believe you need looking after."

Penelope suddenly remembered the part she had set herself to play, and gave him a languishing look.

"I should love being looked after, but I am afraid I should give you too much trouble. Do you find me very troublesome?"

She made a gesture for him to be seated by her side, which he ignored.

"Old Doctor Scarlett prescribed rest and quiet. Take a nap. You'll feel better by and by."

Penelope called to him as he moved away, but without betraying her annoyance.

"May I trouble you? My book—"

Algy picked up the book and read the title scornfully.

"Kindred Souls! What rot!"

He tossed the book carelessly into a chair two places from the one in which Penelope was seated. Penelope's indignation got the better of her resolution to be ingratiating.

"Frances Mamby is not supposed to write rot, Mr. Scarlett. She writes for the elect."

"Then thank heaven I am not one of the elect! Never was very keen on souls and that sort of nonsense. Honest, straightforward sort of chaps like me aren't generally authorities on souls. Hello! Eight bells—twelve o'clock. The smoking room steward will be posting

the ship's run. I think I'll have 'a look."

"Honest, straightforward sort of chaps, indeed!" said Penelope angrily, watching him stroll off to the smoking room. But when Algy's back was turned, he smiled broadly.

Five minutes later he came up excitedly to Penelope, who was determined not to notice him, and who was apparently absorbed in her book, which she had reached after a struggle.

"I say—I've won the pool!"

Penelope took no notice.

"Fifteen pounds! How shall we spend the money, Miss Yard, when we get to London?"

Penelope, surprised at the plurality of the personal pronoun, was betrayed into looking up. But immediately she reverted to her book, perceiving the trick to make her talk. Algy seated himself beside her.

"I suppose I ought to say, how will you spend your share?"

"My share!" cried Penelope, another resolution going to smash.

"Certainly. Here you are—eight pounds. That makes you owe me ten shillings."

He counted out eight sovereigns, and offered them to her. Penelope looked at him astounded.

"Isn't it you who have a touch of fever? And are you not delirious? I have never bet on a ship's run in my life."

"But you did. You have."

"Your joke is too subtle for me, Mr. Scarlett."

"Only yesterday you told me you thought it would be great fun to go in for the pool. I simply took you at your word."

Penelope, very angry, stammered: "It was an imper—it was an imper—" Then she remembered her role. "It was an im—imprudence. Surely you didn't put my name down on the list in a public smoking room?"

"I bracketed it with mine," said Algy coolly.

"How dared you?"

"Don't worry. I called you Mr. X. I was down as Mr. Z."

"How clever! And have you other aliases, Mr. Scarlett?"

Algy hastened to cover his confusion by calling Penelope's attention to the sovereigns jingling in his hand.

"What shall I do with your winnings? Won't you take them?"

"The money is not mine. Give it to the Seaman's Fund if you wish."

Penelope again picked up her book, while Algy regarded her ruefully.

"I am sorry that you think me impertinent. I thought it might amuse you."

"And why should you amuse me?"

"Well, fate has thrown us together, you know."

"Then you think it a duty?"

"To please a charming woman? Hardly."

Penelope blushed.

"Why, I'm only a blue stocking. Everybody calls me that."

"I don't. Then you aren't angry that I put your name down for the pool, and that I coupled your name with mine?"

"But you didn't, you see. You simply wrote X. and Z. The letters mean nothing."

The bugle sounded for luncheon.

Dinner—Saturday evening. Algy was in a blue study, taking no notice of Penelope's remarks. Finally she touched his sleeve.

"Mr. Scarlett! I have spoken to you twice."

"Awfully sorry. I was trying to catch what the captain was saying."

"Am I so dull that you despair of me?"

"No," whispered Algy. "You are adorable. It is I who despair because I seem to irritate you so much."

"On the contrary, you interest me. There is something rather mysterious about you, Mr. Scarlett."

"Really? Do tell me why."

"Your moments of profound abstraction, your air of gloom—that is, occasional gloom—surely it is significant of something. I spoke to you twice, and you took not the slightest notice."

"I was listening to the captain."

"But to forget your own name, Mr. Scarlett! How extraordinary!"

"I was listening to the captain, I tell you."

"Then, of course, your alias!"

"Alias!" said Algy in alarm. "What alias do you mean? Oh, my gambler's alias, you mean." Algy sighed with relief. "But that doesn't make me mysterious, surely. I share it with you. My dear Miss Yard, I am an open book. Let who will read."

"When authors have shameful episodes in their books, they are very apt to lurk behind a pseudonym."

"Shameful episodes! Do I look like a villain?"

"Villains wear masks sometimes, Mr. Scarlett."

"Really, if you think me an adventurer—" Algy was beginning to be really angry.

"One meets them on shipboard, I'm told," said Penelope recklessly.

Algy hit back quite as recklessly.

"And adventuresses, too."

"Really, Mr. Scarlett!"

"Why haven't I a right to call you an adventuress when you call me a villain? Perhaps you think my name is not really Scarlett?"

The hypocrite! Penelope shuddered but replied calmly:

"Why should I think about the matter at all?"

"Because," said Algy in challenge,

"I assure you it is. Why do you stare at me like that? I give you my word of honor it is. Are you by any chance a secret service detective, and do you think me a criminal?"

Penelope, bewildered for the moment, remembered that peers have family names. "Scarlett" of course must be the family name of Lord Botherick.

"Do I look like one?" she asked coolly.

"Hardly a detective, perhaps. But there's an intense look in your eye at times that would make me quail if I were not an innocent man. I am sure you are delving after a secret."

"I am not after Mr. Scarlett's secret, at least." Penelope smiled mysteriously.

"What a silly argument we have had! You know we were precious near quarreling."

"I have no quarrel with Mr. Scarlett." "Then shall we have coffee in the writing room?"

"Yes; why not?"

XIX

SUNDAY morning. Algy and Penelope were walking up and down the promenade deck.

"Have you been to service, Penelope?"

"Yes."

"And did those demure lips breathe a prayer for me?"

"Are you so wicked that you need praying for?"

"A pious benediction isn't superfluous even for a saint."

"But supposing it was not a benison? The psalms this morning were very denunciatory and revengeful."

"I know—'may his guilty head be cast against a stone' and that sort of thing. You didn't think of my poor pate, I hope, when you read them."

"You take so much for granted. And how did you amuse yourself while I was praying—"

"For me? How good of you! I couldn't understand why I felt this ecstatic peace."

"I was going to say while I was praying for mamma, Mr. Scarlett."

"Poor Fanny!"

He looked at Penelope in dismay, but apparently she had not noticed the slip.

"I wonder if Lord Botherick prayed for her this morning, Mr. Scarlett?"

"I wonder?" said Algy gloomily.

"Sometimes I am afraid his mind doesn't dwell on her so devoutly as it ought."

Penelope was secretly elated at his gloomy air.

"And why do you say that?"

"I have finished 'Kindred Souls,'" he said abruptly.

"And you still think it rot?"

"I can't make up my mind. At first I thought the hero a cad—that at all cost he should be loyal to the heroine, even

when he began to question whether he really loved her or simply had fallen in love with her. There's a difference, you know."

"You speak with the confidence of authority. And the other woman—what do you think of her?"

"A sly minx! She was only playing with him."

"Surely you don't defend the hero for being disloyal?"

"Poor beggar, fate was too strong for him. That was all. Poor, poor chap!"

"You are rather fond of the word 'fate,' Mr. Scarlett. The weak are always whimpering about fate. Strong men take fate in their hands."

"By Jove, I believe you are right. Funking one's fences is a pitiable business. Better ride for a fall. Better go at it, hit or miss, than dawdle about."

"One can't expect to ride with the fox and to hunt with the hounds."

"It was that other girl's fault. She was the very devil."

"Only the instrument of your fate, perhaps."

"But the patient doesn't caress the instrument that makes him squeal. I hope you are not defending that sexless flirt?"

"But you must remember that she thought it her duty—"

"To break a man's heart?"

"Men's hearts are *never* broken, Mr. Scarlett. That is a physiological absurdity."

"I am not so sure. However, we won't quarrel about a bally book."

"Then we will change the subject. Hasn't this been a delightful voyage?"

"This is the only voyage that hasn't bored me."

"The weather has been perfect."

"How strangely fate has thrown us together!"

"Fate again, Mr. Scarlett."

"Well, I believe in it. Or is it Providence? You know I am a religious sort of chap at heart, though you may not think so."

"How delightful to discover new virtues in you day by day!"

"They surprise me myself—these bright and shining virtues. You are re-

sponsible for them. I suppose that is why I like you so much. You give a fellow something to think about. I don't suppose I can ever again be the happy-go-lucky fellow I was. Once my life was a round of hunting and shooting and polo and—"

"And lovemaking, when there was nothing else to do?"

Algy whirled about on the heel of his tennis shoe, then looked at her defiantly.

"Well, yes, flirting, if you like. But all that sort of thing is over now. I'm going in for serious things. I shall stand for Parliament."

"A Tory platform, of course?"

"What platform would you approve of?"

"Reform."

"Right! Reform by all means."

"The halcyon days of an effete aristocracy are surely on the wane, Mr. Scarlett. Your strenuous character puts you in the fore rank of the fighters. 'No class privilege' will be your clarion."

"Er—certainly."

"Down with the House of Lords!"

"We mustn't be demagogues, though. Of course we'll curtail the power of veto, if you say so."

"Votes for women!"

"Certainly," said Algy feebly, "votes for women. I think I'll have a whiskey and soda in the smoking room, if you don't mind."

Late Monday night. Penelope had changed the position of her steamer chair to the shelter deck, much to the mystification of Algy, who had been looking for her everywhere.

"Did you ask the deck steward to change your place?"

"Yes; this place is so much more retired. I am a little weary of seeing people."

"Is that why you have avoided me all day? And did you cut out dinner because—"

"But you yourself did not go down to dinner, Mr. Scarlett. I saw you pacing the deck restlessly."

"No appetite."

"It is rather chilly. I think I'll go in."

"Please don't turn in just yet. I feel beastly miserable. Do talk to me a little."

"You have moped in the smoking room most of the day."

"I have been having it out with myself. Penelope, I have made a tragic discovery. I have a conscience."

"And it gives you twinges?"

"Most awful twinges. They are excruciating."

"I suppose the office of a conscience, Mr. Scarlett, is to hurt. That is what they are made for. It is sheer madness for us to think we can cajole and deceive a conscience. The function of a conscience is to hurt. Only we can't cut a conscience out as we can an appendix."

"I have been thinking over things. I sha'n't stand for Parliament, after all."

"You are very fickle. You will never succeed in your career if you change your mind so often."

"I have given up all thoughts of a career—for the present. I shall sail for Mombasa as soon as possible."

"You are strangely restless. Mombasa is in South Africa, isn't it?"

"Yes. I am going in for big game."

"The panacea of the conventional Englishman when he has had an unfortunate love affair, I believe."

"But, first of all, I have to square things—with a woman. I have made a desperate ass of myself. When I sailed from New York I thought I was in love. I find I am not—at least, not as I imagined."

"So you go to South Africa, not because you have broken your own heart, but because you have broken the heart of a woman, Mr. Scarlett?"

"I am a hulking, selfish brute! Penelope, I have an awful confession to make."

"Please don't make it to me. I am not a confessional box."

"I suppose you will never forgive me when you hear it."

"But I don't want to hear it."

"You'll despise me utterly."

"The condition of your heart doesn't interest me in the slightest, Mr. Scarlett."

"I want you to despise me."

"You want me to?"

"I want you to know I'm a bad sort. I am not worth bothering your head about."

"And why do you think I am bothering my head about you?"

"If you don't, you have been only play-acting."

"And have you never distinguished yourself in private theatricals?"

"Once too often, I'm afraid."

"And in the role of impetuous lover?"

"No; this time I have been playing the capering fool. I am making people laugh while my heart is lacerated."

"What people? This is most amusing."

"You, since you are amused."

"My dear Mr. Scarlett, surely the clown affecting high tragedy heroics is a side splitting spectacle. Can the clown expect me to sympathize in his love affairs?"

"You are heartless."

"No; I am supremely indifferent. I think this is a fitting time for me to tell you that I am rather tired of being the confidante of your sentimental follies. You took a most unfair advantage of the embarrassment of a defenseless woman. You affected a consideration for her which you did not feel. And if you failed to dazzle a forlorn maiden by your knightly charms, at least comfort yourself that it was not because you were too modest to display them."

"The remedy was in your own hands, Miss Yard."

"I am using it now, Mr. Scarlett."

"I understand. I shall not bother you any more. But surely you do not mean that we are to part like this?"

Penelope was very near tears, but struggled bravely to be ruthless.

"As enemies—yes. As enemies."

"No; I refuse to be your enemy, Miss Yard. You know what I am going to say—"

"No, no; don't say it, for I am your enemy. I have been almost from the first. Yes, and I have fought you with ignoble weapons. You have asked me to despise you. Now despise me!"

XX

AND so Penelope had conquered. The consummation she had so devoutly hoped for had come to pass. With unfaltering hand, the sorceress had held the lethal potion to the lips of her willing victim. He had sipped and sipped again, boasting of his immunity; and as the subtle poison fired his veins, the radiant vision of Fanny had gradually faded. Now at last he had flung himself at the feet of his sorceress, and she had spurned him. All that she had planned she had accomplished, and thoroughly.

Fanny was saved. But at what a sacrifice! Could she ever again face her fellow suffragettes with clear-eyed rectitude? Had she not stooped to perfidy? Had she not enrolled herself in the doubtful company of enticers and sirens?

Fanny was saved! She said that to herself with a fierce persistency. But the words had no magic in them to comfort her. They mocked her.

It was not the dread of Fanny snapping her well-shaped fingers at her dearly bought salvation that troubled her. In her most sanguine moments Penelope had not expected Fanny to appreciate the sacrifice she had made. Martyrs to causes do not expect gratitude. Not the most doting of fathers, averring with broken voice that the chastisement he is inflicting on an unruly offspring hurts himself quite as much as said offspring, can expect the squirming culprit to kiss the rod that wounds. No, it was not the inevitable wrath of Fanny that made Penelope's soul tremble.

It was the tardy conviction, clamoring more and more loudly, that Lord Botherrick was not the dissipated, degenerate peer she had believed him to be—that he had not laid siege to Fanny's heart, a cold mercenary eye on her money bags—that he was not, in short, a hardened consorter with publicans and sinners and chorus girls.

Yes, there was the Mazie St. Clair episode. Penelope did not forget that. But supposing that he were the victim and dupe? Besides, even if he played an

undignified part in that questionable comedy, had she been right in condemning him for one indiscretion? Her legal knowledge told her that in the eyes of the law even a dog may have his one bite and yet not be deemed utterly vicious.

It was with the determination to punish Lord Algy that she had boldly accepted his challenge and deliberately matched weapons. Once absorbed in the fascinating game of make-believe love, she had drifted along the tide of flirtation, heedless of the rapids below. And now she was in the whirlpools of remorse, struggling frantically to regain her equilibrium, her ideas of right and wrong turned topsy-turvy.

Behold, then, Penelope, sorely wounded and miserable, moping in her tent. Yes, the martyr to the cause was a voluntary prisoner in the narrow confines of her stateroom, stripped of the one consolation of martyrs—a profoundly pig-headed belief that they alone of the whole earth are right.

One by one the leaden hours had been tolled off on the ship's bell. All day long Penelope had sat listlessly at the open porthole of her cabin looking out on the sun-kissed sea. What an intolerable, never ending day it had been! She looked forward to the night with even greater dread.

Then suddenly she heard people rushing past her stateroom. The word *Cynthia* was shouted excitedly. There was a rattle of blocks overhead and a pattering of feet. A calm but stern word of command rang out.

She rushed to the porthole. A red and blue light flared in the darkness, and a rocket screamed. Then a boat, and another and another, were swung from their davits.

Sheer panic held her spellbound. Trembling, she opened the door. A steward reassured her.

"Don't be frightened, miss. We are all right. It's only the *Cynthia*."

"Tell me the worst! Is she wrecked, and are all the people drowned?"

"Nothing to worry about at all, miss. It's just her machinery that's broken down. She has sent us a C.Q.D., and we are going to her assistance. And

Lord Botherick gives you his compliments, miss, and you are not to be frightened. He wants to see you at once. He is waiting near the door of the dining saloon."

Penelope flew to him as a very harbor and refuge. She felt a sobbing thankfulness that *he* was there to give her courage.

"Hello!" he cried cheerily; "here is a pretty to-do."

"Oh, Mr. Scarlett!" she cried, holding out her hands to him in her distress. "Fanny, our poor Fanny!"

"There's not the slightest cause for alarm." He held Penelope's hand tightly in his.

"You only say that to comfort me," she sobbed.

"Nonsense. There is absolutely nothing to worry about. I have just been talking to one of the officers. It seems that the *Cynthia* sent us a C.Q.D. hours ago, but the captain kept the matter dark so as not to frighten us. The *Cynthia* is only half a mile away. We are sending off our boats now to help bring off her first class passengers. They are transferring them to the *Asiatic*."

But Penelope was not so easily comforted.

"Think how frightened she will be! To trust oneself in a little boat in this dark sea—it will terrify her."

"But there is no danger. The sea is as calm as a plate of soup. Now come along. We'll go on the boat deck. We can see the *Cynthia's* lights perfectly. There, our engines have stopped. Fanny will be aboard in half an hour. Better bring a coat or something."

When they reached the deck the last of the *Asiatic's* boats was dancing across the vivid circle of light into the gloom beyond.

"It is beginning to rain," said Algy presently, holding out his hand.

"Fanny will die of pneumonia," wailed Penelope. "She is probably wearing some flimsy evening gown, and she will be too terror-stricken to think of a wrap. Oh, Lord Botherick, if only you were there to comfort her!"

"Then you know that I am Botherick?" he said soberly.

"Yes; I knew it from the second day," answered Penelope in a low voice.

"How?" demanded Algy, grimly curious.

"Does it matter?"

"I suppose not," he admitted gloomily. "Well, our cards are on the table at last. And now—what?"

"I shall tell manna that I am glad you are to marry her, Lord Botherick," said Penelope courageously.

"I wonder if you ought to tell her that?" said Algy slowly.

"Yes; and you'll forgive me if—if I ever doubted that you were worthy?" she pleaded.

"I am afraid it may be too late. Do you forget what I said—"

"Yes, I have forgotten it entirely. And you have."

"You mean I must play the game?" he said bitterly.

One might have thought that Algy, in his rank of lieutenant in the County Yeomanry, was about to lead a forlorn hope, so set was his face.

"Yes," whispered Penelope.

"You mean," he said after a pause, "we are to forget the midsummer madness of this voyage?"

"That you are to forget it—yes."

"I beg your pardon—that I am to forget it! You were only acting, of course."

"Yes," murmured Penelope, wishing that the waves below could swallow her up.

"Then we were both acting." Algy laughed—a most disagreeable laugh, Penelope thought. "So you see, Miss Yard, your intriguing has amounted to nothing—to nothing at all. I can't tell you how relieved I am that *you* were acting, too. Because, you see, you are a rather serious and unsophisticated girl, and your sense of humor is about as big as a flyspeck. And I was afraid—"

"That the biter was bit? How amusing!"

And then Penelope laughed—a horrid and disagreeable laugh, Algy thought.

The rain was coming down smartly now. Algy turned up the collar of Penelope's ulster.

"I will try to be a tolerable step-father," he said after a pause.

"And make Fanny happy—that is the great thing," said Penelope sweetly. "Dear piquante, joyous Fanny, and you the debonair and pleasure loving—you are made for each other."

Algy shook his head solemnly.

"Fanny and I need balance wheels. We are too much like second hands. We shall tick our lives away in a maddening, senseless, frivolity. No calm, no serenity, no call of duty to steady us."

"I could wish that one of you were more serious," sighed Penelope.

"And we shall be wickedly extravagant," continued Algy, plunged in gloom.

"I am afraid you are."

"We shall flirt like sixty—that is, Fanny will."

"You will love her so much she won't want to," said Penelope encouragingly, but secretly convinced that every word he spoke was true.

"We shall both be jealous, and we shall fight like cats," continued lugubrious Algy.

"But you will be patient, won't you?"

"I don't want to be morbid. But I see the divorce court looming up ahead."

"Oh, don't! I can't bear it. Don't dwell on the dark side of things. Think of our poor darling Fanny out there in that wild waste of waters. She is white and still, and how frightened! Her eyes are turned to the cheerful lights of our ship. She knows you are waiting for her, and she is longing for you to take her in your arms."

"Poor little Fanny!" Algy was moved by Penelope's eloquence. "By Jove, the first of the boats are returning. Come along; we must be at the gangway to meet her."

"No," cried Penelope, terror-stricken now that the crisis had come. "I am going to wait in the writing room. Fanny will like to see you alone—first of all. I should be in the way."

"If you aren't with me it will make things harder," groaned Algy. "You see, I haven't thought of Fanny as much as I should, and—"

"Some day, years after you are mar-

ried, we'll tell her things. She will laugh then. Please don't stay longer. I shall go below presently."

"We'll look for you in the writing room then."

He walked slowly down the deck.

"And, Algy?" Penelope had hastened after him.

"Yes, Penelope?"

"Tell mamma I am wonderfully happy that she is to be married to you—that I think she is very fortunate to marry you."

"Thanks," said Algy gruffly. And then he saw that there were tears in her eyes. He drew her impulsively to him and kissed her.

"How can you? How dare you?" Penelope beat her palms together in her distress.

"I'm awfully sorry. I couldn't help it. You looked so wistful, such a demure gray Quaker."

"Don't say such things to me—you mustn't say such things. Oh, how can you?"

"I was a brute," said Algy remorsefully. "But couldn't you," he pleaded, "think of it as just the chaste salute of a stepfather? Try to, please."

"I'll try to," said Penelope, and her attempt ended in a sob. "But it will be very difficult."

XXI

REMORSEFULLY Algy elbowed his way to the saloon deck, where excited passengers crowded about the rail. A nice mess he had made of things! Oh, that wretched, susceptible heart of his! What tricks it played him! And how he dreaded the meeting with Fanny! One look and she would know; she was so deucedly clever. And he had promised to play the game. To play the game! Pooh, how could he deceive astute Fanny—for a whole lifetime?

The first boatload of the *Cynthia's* passengers was already at the ship's side. Huddled together, bedraggled and shivering, their faces peered upward, unnaturally pale in the weird glare of the electric light.

Would Fanny be hysterical, like this neurotic actress, shrieking out her helplessness as two sailors goaded and entreated her to jump from the dancing boat to the uncertain refuge of the swinging ladder? Or inert and dazed, like this creature of *avouirdupois*, who was literally being hauled up the ship's side like a bag of wheat?

Somehow Algy had never before thought of Fanny as helpless and appealing. He felt a great tenderness for her—his poor frightened, white Fanny. Presently her anxious face would be seeking him out, confident that he would be there to take her into his strong arms and love her. Pity and remorse tormented him.

A second boat shot into the circle of light. Algy fought his way brusquely to the gangway and waited.

And then a peal of laughter—as wild and delicious, as carefree and musical as a lark's song—rang out of the darkness again and again. And that was Fanny.

Algy pulled himself together. The laughter was reassuring. What an ass he had been to imagine her as white and frightened like the rest of her anæmic sex!

Once more that wild laugh. Algy's smile was less complacent. Presently he did not smile at all.

In the sternsheets of the boat sat Fanny flanked on either side by a devout cavalier. Two other cavaliers faced her. Four aching but gallant arms outstretched heroically held aloft, canopy-wise, four corners of a mackintosh. Enthroned like a rosy goddess beneath was giggling Fanny, rewarding the gallant four with dazzling smiles and coquettish quips.

Now she saw him and waved her hand gaily. The eyes of the four, as one man, glared at him in fierce resentment.

Lightly she sprang up the ladder; lightly she stepped on the deck—a grotesque but bewitching little figure.

A pair of man's clumsy fur-lined motor boots kept her feet warm. A fur rug was across her knees—and the fur rug did not belong to Fanny. A fur coat of leopards' skins—surely not a

woman's coat—was over her shoulders. And a cap—it matched neither the coat nor the rug—was perched impudently on her head.

"Hello, Algy!" She pulled off the fur gloves many sizes too large for her, and gave him two warm hands. "It's nice to see you again. Isn't this a gloriously thrilling adventure?"

"Great larks," said Algy grumpily, staring at the four cavaliers, who, reinforced now by several others, made a solid phalanx about her.

"Where is the I. P.?" she demanded carelessly, kicking off the motor boots.

"Penelope," said Algy, with careful dignity, "is quite ill with anxiety. She is waiting for you in the writing room. Her unselfishness is beautiful—her tact marvelous. We have both suffered a good deal, Fanny."

"But to worry—how silly! Everybody has been so kind and attentive."

"Send these chattering magpies to the devil," he whispered irritably.

"Oh, Algy!" she looked at him reproachfully. "When they have been so kind and considerate!"

"Send these purring pussy cats right about face," he demanded with authority.

"Bother, dear, you are tiresome. They are dears."

"They are smirking idiots," growled Algy.

But Fanny beamed on the smirking idiots.

"You've all been too sweet. Mr. Carleton, your motor boots. Won't you lend them to me again tomorrow if the night is chilly? Your rug, Mr. Young. I love it." She drew the silk caressingly across her cheek, looking at him archly. "I can't bear to give it back. Tuck me up with it tomorrow morning, will you? And your coat, Mr. Boothby. How it thrilled me to wear it because I knew you shot the terrible animals yourself, and I couldn't help thinking all the time how brave you must be. Yes, I assure you I had wild, wild thoughts when I wore that coat. Your cap, Mr. Vandewater. Is it very valuable, or may I keep it as a souvenir? Do you really think it becoming? Thank you so

much. Good night—good night! I shall dream of every one of you!"

She kissed her finger tips, and the cavaliers trooped off reluctantly to the smoking room. Fanny tucked her arm comfortably into Algy's sleeve.

"Oh, dear," she sighed; "I suppose I ought to go to the anxious I. P. But I dread it so. It was such a relief to escape from that terrifying conscience of hers. I feel too exhausted to grapple with it tonight."

"I wish," said Algy reproachfully, "you wouldn't call Penelope the I. P. She's a sweet girl, and it isn't kind of you. I've become very fond of Penelope. Her conscience isn't half so bad as you made out. Do you know, Fanny, she doesn't disapprove of me now."

"That's nice." Fanny giggled.

"No, I think she—she rather respects me."

"Really!" Fanny laughed again.

"Perhaps you think that impossible?"

"Oh, mercy, no. Do you mind if we walk a bit? I was cramped up in that horrid boat so long, and the smirking idiots, alias the chattering magpies, alias the purring pussy cats, *did* bore me so."

"Indeed! But aren't you grateful to Penelope?"

"Penelope is a meddler."

"Meddler! A meddler when she refuses to meddle in our love affair, Fanny?"

"Do sit down here. I want to talk to you. Have you a cigarette? There's no one looking."

He held out his cigarette case. By the flare of the match he saw that Fanny looked cross—very cross.

"Is it kind to keep Penelope waiting so long? She is fearfully anxious, you know."

"Penelope is always anxious about something, and it bores me," said Fanny irritably.

"Everybody seems to bore you tonight; and do you quite appreciate Penelope's charm and character?"

"You do, Bother dear, don't you?"

"I do," said Algy firmly.

"How industrious you must have been!"

Algy hastened to vindicate himself.

"Really I can't understand you, Fanny. You wired me to disarm her prejudices. Very well, I have done my best. But now when I've accomplished that—when every obstacle to your loving me is removed—"

"And your loving me, Algy, I suppose?" she asked softly.

"Of course—of course. When, as I said, every obstacle is removed—"

"Except old Lady Botherick—you forget her."

"Oh, Penelope will manage her. The mater will like Penelope," declared Algy enthusiastically, but not too tactfully.

"Oh, dear!"

"Great heavens! What in the world are you sighing about now? I hadn't imagined our meeting quite like this. You haven't offered to kiss me."

But Algy, be it observed, had not offered to kiss Fanny.

"Algy dear, I'm very unhappy. I'm a wretched woman!"

"Unhappy!" Algy was righteously angry and took no pains to hide his wrath. "Unhappy, when after five days' separation you are with the man you are engaged to—or practically engaged to?"

"Oh, dear!" sighed Fanny for the fourth time.

"May I call your attention to the fact," he demanded politely, "that these sighs are emitted most inopportunistically?"

"You'll hate me in a moment, I expect."

"I'm rather mystified certainly."

"Poor dear Bother, my heart aches for you."

"Because I am going to marry you?"

"Because—because you are *not* going to marry me."

"Well I'm damned!" Algy sat down abruptly.

Fanny hid her face in the rough sleeve of his coat.

"Algy dear," she said in a smothered voice, "don't, don't be angry with me. Do try to forgive me. I wouldn't hurt you if I could help it. I know it is going to be a terrible blow. How my heart trembled when I saw you at the gang-

way faithfully waiting! I did hope so much—after I had thought things over and realized that it was all a wretched mistake—I did hope so much that you and Penelope—” She lifted her head suddenly. “You *aren't* engaged to her, are you?”

“Certainly not!”

“Oh, dear—oh, dear! It would be such a comfort if you were. It would have helped you to bear the shock, dear Algy, a little less bitterly. I did hope so much she might have trapped you—I mean, of course, consoled you—while I was away. Because, Algy dear, I—I—”

“You are engaged to one of the chattering magpies, I suppose?” He looked down at her accusingly.

“No, no, *no!* I am not engaged to anyone. I can't bear to be engaged to anyone. I loathe unutterably the thought of marrying anyone. I can't be harnessed and domestic Algy, and I won't. I can't and simply won't sacrifice my whole life knitting carpet slippers and wiping the noses of dirty babies. I want my freedom, I tell you. I want to

drink deeply of life and joy. I want to dance when I want to dance. I will not be tamed and beat my wings frantically against the bars of a cage.”

“This is very sudden,” said Algy.

Vainly he tried to look tragic and hurt. That would have been much the more dignified way. But it was no use. Uncontrollable laughter shook him.

“Oh,” pleaded Fanny, clasping her hands frantically, “don't, don't laugh in that terrible mocking way. I know I deserve it, and I pity you so. But you won't do anything reckless, will you? Promise me you won't do anything dreadful.”

To Fanny's dismay, Algy caught her in his arms and kissed her—a resounding, unsentimental, platonic smack.

“You mustn't,” wailed Fanny. “Can't you understand? Won't you understand? I don't love you, Algy; I don't love you.”

“Consider it,” cried joyous Algy, “the chaste salute of a stepson. Good night. I'm going to tell Penelope.”



IN THE SUBWAY

By Louis Untermeyer

CHAOS is conquered even as we ride;
The rock is rent, the darkness torn aside
And all the horrors of the deep defied.

The centuries disclose their secret graves;
Riding in splendor through a world of waves,
The ancient elements become our slaves.

Uncanny fancies whisper to and fro,
Terror and night surround us here below,
And through the house of death we come and go.

And here, oh, startling note of irony,
I see the men and women facing me
Reading their papers calmly, leisurely.

A BOOK OF LOVE

By John Kendrick Bangs

A BOOK of Love comes hither to be bound.
What style of cover think you should be found
Upon a Book of Love?
Some say "half-calf, in hue a sort of dove"—
That might do well perhaps for puppy love,
Or possibly for some soft moon-eyed pair
Who moo their feelings on the summer air,
But not for me,
As you shall see.

Some wights incline to binding far from cheap,
In "full crushed sheep"—
And maybe that is fit for those who feel
A trifle "sheepish," as they sigh and kneel,
And all the passions of the heart reveal.

For me, if it were mine to say, I'd call
For none at all!
For love that must be bound is not the sort
Of love I care for when I go to court;
But that unfettered kind that, like the rose,
Spreads fragrance on the breeze where'er it blows,
And knows no shackles that shall hold it back
When impish impulse bids it seek some track
That leads it on from that spot or from this
To undiscovered realms of purest bliss—
Ah, that shall be
The love for me!

Yet, if some binding must be, then I choose
Some filmy chiffon in soft pinks or blues,
With sundry added graces, touches, airs,
Such as my Polly wears!



"DID you know that they can make shoes out of all kinds of skins?"
"How about banana skins?"
"They make slippers out of them."

KNOWLEDGE

By Edwin L. Sabin

ROBERTS and I sat upon a low ledge of the shore and watched his two children and their girlish mother seeking shells along the sand of the little cove before us. Ever and anon the giant green Pacific combers, intracing through the reefs, darted a finger of foam at the strolling figures, so that they all must spring and the youngsters must shout with glee. The finger was to them a joke; but to me it was insidious, avid, like the swift dart of an octopus arm. So terrible is the sea, never satiated, always hoping.

Roberts observed it gravely. I fancied that he thought the same as I.

"It's hard to believe that within a few hours all this space where we are sitting will be covered by water," he remarked. "There is almost a six-foot rise hereabouts. The tide is a mysterious thing to me. I never could quite comprehend it."

"It's simple enough, when you understand," I answered.

"Possibly. The principle is there; but the workings of it always astonish me. However, I am not an educated man. I never went further than the high school. Sometimes I've been sorry that I stopped short, and sometimes I've been satisfied."

"You'd have made a great varsity tackle," I ventured. His length and breadth were splendid in their generous proportions. He was a veritable stag-hound. "Maybe you missed out on that."

He smiled somberly, watching his family.

"Maybe," he assented. "But as for higher education—it has its advantages and again its disadvantages. It is as

bad to know too much as it is not to know enough. If you don't mind I'll tell you a story to illustrate my point. It is about three persons, a girl and two men."

"Go ahead," I encouraged. He settled back comfortably and began:

The girl of course was beautiful. There always is the woman, soon or late, in every man's life. One of these two men was educated; the other was not. The educated man was a professor—a college professor; and to him the woman had come rather late. He was forty-five, at least—a little man, about five feet five. I'll call him Professor Smith. The other chap, Brown, was a big husky brute, about my build, say; and he was only thirty. He had never been to college. He had worked. But he and the Professor were both at this little winter resort on the Coast, where they met the girl; and both fell in love with her.

They were taken very hard. The place was small, and they were the only available men; so that when one was not with her, the other was. Really, between the two it was nip and tuck. To the younger man, Brown, it seemed that the girl certainly must prefer the Professor, because he was mature and knew so much. He was quite a naturalist—that was what he taught in the college, something about natural history—and he had a story about everything that the girl could pick up. Besides, he was an agreeable little man, anyhow. And to the Professor it seemed that she must prefer Brown, who was young and big and athletic. But she appeared happy with either, and showed no favoritism.

It was toward the close of the stay of all three, when about five in the afternoon, Brown, the younger man, was out walking by himself along the shore. The girl was somewhere on a jaunt with the Professor. The coast there is much like the coast here—high rock walls cut and battered by the waves, enclosing little coves or else abutting upon the water and hurling it back. Brown had walked briskly, and was some ten miles from the village, when he heard voices calling. That is, he thought he did. The surf made quite a noise, you know. He searched about, peering over into the coves and upon the exposed ledges whence the ocean had temporarily receded, until finally he glimpsed, down below and around a shoulder of the cliffs, the Professor and Miss—ah—Jones. She was the girl, you know.

They did not see him at once. They seemed to be in trouble. The girl was sitting, as if exhausted, upon her coat, and the Professor was standing, with his hands to his mouth for a megaphone. He shouted to Brown, as soon as Brown was observed; but the great combers from a thousand miles of ocean were crashing so that not a word could be distinguished except "Help us." Very recklessly—he was young and strong and athletic, and rather fond of showing off—Brown slid down the face of the sandstone shoulder, plumped from four or five feet into the soft sand, and went plowing along to them. But at this, instead of being pleased or relieved, the girl began to wring her hands, and the Professor started toward him, motioning him back.

Now this gave Brown rather an odd sensation of being unwelcome and of intruding. But it was speedily explained.

"My dear fellow!" greeted the Professor. "What did you come down for? Didn't you hear me say to stay on top?"

"No," said Brown shortly; "I didn't catch a word—the surf was too loud. What's the matter, anyway?"

He looked past the Professor anxiously at the girl.

"Oh, we can't get back up again!" she cried piteously. "And you can't,

either. If you only had stayed on top you could have helped us; but now"—and she continued to wring her hands—"we're all in here together!"

"That's it," resumed the Professor. "Miss Jones and I very foolishly climbed down in here, and we haven't been able to climb out. That is a different proposition. We've been trying for an hour, but the rock is apparently unscalable."

"Oh, I think we can manage," spoke Brown hopefully. He was six feet one inch and muscular, and there had been few things in a physical way that he could not accomplish. "Let me look."

The Professor accompanied him. Now the case proved to be this: they were in a sure enough *cul de sac* of the shore line. The face of the sandstone cliff was twelve or fifteen feet high, practically perpendicular, and worn smooth by sea and weather. The shoulder where Brown had scrambled down formed one point or horn, projecting into the boiling sea. On the inside of this horn soft sand had piled. Thence the cliff face curved slightly inward, bordering a flat ledge upon which the sea evidently washed; and met the sea with another shoulder or horn forty or fifty yards along. And the Professor was right: there was no way—there had been no way—by which he and the girl could get out. The lowest spot was, as said, at least twelve feet. They both were short.

"It was out of the question for her to stand on my shoulders and pull herself up," explained the Professor aside. "And if I might have stood on her shoulders, I couldn't have reached her from above—and I wouldn't want to go away and leave her."

He gazed at the younger man earnestly.

"No," said Brown. And he asked, in manner casual as he could make it: "The tide is coming in, isn't it?"

The Professor nodded. "I should judge so." And he again gazed earnestly at the younger man.

"Well," remarked Brown quickly, "then we must get out or we'll be doused." The spray mist, borne by the breeze, smote across them.

The girl was hurrying, as if unable to wait, toward them. Along the sandy ledge she tripped, between the sandstone face and the crashing combers.

"What shall we do?" she pleaded.

"If one of us men will stand upon the other man's shoulders, and get a grip with knees and elbows in that crack, he ought to wiggle to the top," said Brown. "Then he can haul you up."

"And the other man would have to stay?" she asked.

"Just until a rope could be fetched."

"But the tide is coming in!"

"Is it?" commented Brown, again casually.

"Yes." She spoke with breath short, eyes startled, for she was afraid. "See—that rock out there is getting covered. I've been watching it. The water may come up right over us!"

The Professor and Brown looked at each other.

"You're the lightest. I'll give you a boost, and you haul yourself up. Then I'll pass up Miss Jones," said Brown.

The Professor shook his head.

"No. You're the bigger, and you're stronger, Brown. You go first. You can help Miss Jones up better than I."

"But I don't like the idea of one being left here to wait," objected Miss Jones. She didn't indicate that she referred to either one in particular. "How high does the tide come, I wonder?"

She uttered a little scream, and shrank against the face of the cliff, for an unusually large comber, rolling swiftly and breaking, flung a spatter of spray upon her slim ankles.

"There's no use in the three of us getting wet, Miss Jones," replied the Professor. "I'll give Brown a boost, and then he can haul you up. It's only ten miles to the village, and I can wait very comfortably. I've been digging around in the water so much that I don't mind being wet a little."

But Brown was not willing.

"Neither do I," he declared. "You go, Professor—you and Miss Jones. I'll stay. You're lighter and can climb up easily."

"You're the strong one," retorted the

Professor. "I don't believe I could haul up Miss Jones."

"How high does the tide come, I wonder?" she persisted.

"Not much higher, maybe," answered Brown.

"But it looks as if it came way up."

Another mighty comber rolled in resistlessly. It towered over more, gathering way like a snowball, until the setting sun shone through its long light green crest. The two horns of the cove gallantly met it and hurled it back in a wild upheaval of fighting spume; but between the horns it surged as into a break of the enemy's center, and crashing upon the reef spears, still drove in fragments to the solid frontage of the sandstone cliff. The ledge was drenched ankle deep. The girl again screamed and shrank as the frothy water swirled over her shootops. Brown grasped her by the arm to steady her. The water receded, leaving the low ledge dripping.

"There's really no use in us all staying here to get wet," reiterated the Professor. "Up with you, both of you. You can make it from my shoulders, Brown."

"You're the lightest," objected Brown.

"You're the younger and stronger," retorted the Professor.

"But I'm so tall I'll not wet over!"

This, of course, was foolishness. He knew, and the Professor knew, that if the tide rose even four feet no man could keep footing with those hungry combers launching their tons of angry water at him. He would be plucked from the face of the cliff as a ripe berry is plucked from a bush.

"I wonder how high the tide does come?" implored the girl.

"Very likely it's on the turn now," said Brown. "That last comber was the biggest."

"Isn't there any way of telling? It would be terrible if either of you stayed here and were drowned!"

"Oh, there's no danger of *that*," assured Brown.

"No, there's no danger of *that*," agreed the Professor.

His eyes had been following along the ledge upon which they stood. Abruptly

he stooped, and with his fingers pried a living shell from a little niche. He examined it, as if minutely, and with alert mien faced Brown and the girl.

"Here is proof!" he said. "I wonder why I did not notice it before and save anxiety. This is a variety of rare mussel which clings just at the edge of high tide. I won't burden you with the scientific name."

"Oh, are you sure?" demanded the girl.

"Certainly," said the Professor.

"So you *are* sure, are you?" persisted Brown.

The Professor nodded, turning the shell over in his hand.

"I ought to be. I've been making a sort of specialty of mollusks, you know."

"He's full of the most interesting information," volunteered the girl.

"So long as he's sure—" hesitated Brown, and then stopped. Who was he to dispute education?

"Perfectly," declared the Professor, still turning the shell over and over in his palm, as if thoughtfully. "Perfectly. Now, you see, that being the case, Brown was right. The tide is high. It's washing these mussels. You go ahead, Brown, you and Miss Jones. You're both young. I'm the old codger, old and tough, too. You hustle along and send me a rope; and I'll—ah—er—be collecting more sea forms."

"Isn't that funny, about finding the mussel!" laughed the girl gaily. "Professor Smith is always astonishing me, anyway."

"Yes, but—" faltered Brown.

"I insist. You must, both of you," decreed the Professor. He stood with his face against the sandstone. "On my shoulders," he said to Brown.

"I think it would be fairer to draw lots," protested Brown.

"I think it would be fairer to get Miss Jones to a fire as quickly as possible, so she can change from those wet shoes. You're the one. You're young and can cover the ground and help her to cover it."

Brown reluctantly mounted upon the Professor's shoulders. Thus aided, he

could go hitching up by means of a fissure where the cliff wall sloped slightly backward, and he reached the top. He leaned over.

"All ready," he called down.

"Well—good-bye; and good luck," said the Professor with sudden voice to the girl, and extended his hand.

The hand was trembling. The girl took it.

"Oh, good-bye," she replied. "I hope you don't get *very* wet."

She had flushed. So had he; and about them both was a curious air of constraint. And it occurred to Brown, like a flash, that the Professor had proposed and had been rejected. Brown's heart gave a great leap of joy.

(Here Roberts paused, watching his wife and the two children on the beach before us; and I waited for him to resume. "Yes," he mused; "and a little later Brown found out from the girl herself that this was the truth." Now Roberts resumed:)

She stood on the Professor's shoulders, and Brown got a good grip on her arms and hauled her up and landed her beside him. That was good. Then he leaned over again. The Professor was at that moment in water to his knees. A big comber had rolled in—but it went swishing out, baring the ledge once more. The Professor looked up pale and odd, the little man; the glasses of his spectacles were moist—where the spray had misted—and he had a hand fumbling for a hold on the smooth worn sandstone wall. With the other he waved shortly.

"So long," he called up amidst the booming and the crashing.

"So long—but I'll be back in a jiffy," called Brown, and cursed himself for being on top.

He might—it might have been that he could have made a rope of his shirt or trousers—he had no coat—or manage some way; but the Professor had declared positively—and Brown was not an educated man—he never had made a study of the habits of mussels—

"Isn't it queer about those mussels!" chirped the girl as they hustled off. "Nobody but the Professor would have

known. He's such a dear man; don't you think so?"

"Yes," said Brown.

They hurried through the gloam—they hurried hand in hand part of the way. Of course it takes time to cover ten miles across country. At the outskirts of the village they parted. With only one quick little kiss the girl went on alone to the hotel, and Brown turned into the first yard for a rope. It was a fisherman's shack.

(Roberts again paused, his eyes upon his wife and children. So, "Didn't he find a rope?" I suggested.)

"Yes," responded Roberts, speaking

intently, "I got the rope; and the fisherman was home, too. We raced to a barn and put a horse into a cart, and at a gallop made back for the cove. The surf was booming and crashing. You've no idea how it sounded to me in the dusk, while we lashed the horse and I thought upon the Professor, waiting and wet. Especially since I had found out—that—from the girl. We had the rope—yes; and we struck the cove without difficulty. I wasn't back exactly in a jiffy, of course, but as quickly as possible. Only—" And Roberts choked.

"What?" I asked.

"There was something else for me to find out. There is no such mussel."



A LULLABY

By Maud A. Black

BLOW softly, O winds, for the summer is sleeping;
O lilies, your fragrant dew drops on her breast;
Come hither, red poppies, through drowsy lids peeping,
Lean over her slumbers and lull her to rest.

Sleep, summer, sleep, for fast the leaves are falling,
And through the wood the cushat dove is calling.
Sleep, summer, sleep.

Dream on, weary heart, in a slumber unbroken,
For all the glad days of thy summer are o'er;
May Lethe's sad waves, like a farewell unspoken,
Enfold thee in sleep, to awaken—no more!

Sleep, sad heart, sleep, for fast the leaves are falling;
Still through the wood the cushat dove is calling.
Sleep, sad heart, sleep!



MRS. MURRAY HILL—What did you enjoy most on your motor trip through Europe?

MRS. WEST SIDE—Well, one of my most delightful experiences was hearing the French pheasants singing the Mayonnaise.

MAN'S FRAILTIES—AND WOMAN'S

By Sophie Irene Loeb

CUPID composes; woman supposes; man proposes; marriage disposes; affinity interposes and divorce closes.

Love is blind, but marriage is gifted with second sight.

Some women think they have poise when in reality it is *avoirdufois*.

A woman purrs at being termed a kitten but scratches when called a cat.

The man of the hour never has a minute to spare.

People who prate at being willing to pay the price usually flee at the first figures.

A friend is one who not only fills a want but wants to fill it.

There are two kinds of suffragettes—the unhappily married and the unhappily unmarried.

The world is a mirror that reflects what we give it—but we want it to magnify.

Ready repartee reflects the radium rays of reason.

The men who reach the summits are few; the majority camp somewhere on the journey, while the balance get tired and take the toboggan route.

Nothing succeeds like successfully convincing the other fellow that you are a success.

A woman has two prerogatives—changing her mind and changing the subject.

Golf is a game in which the ball lies every way and the player always.

Marriage is the only lottery in which unfortunately there are no blanks.

The wages of sin are the thorns collected on the return journey of the “easiest way.”

Most men think they have made a hit when the hit has made them.

A grave is a chatterbox compared to a woman who sulks.

Marriage is the triumph of woman's wiles and man's conceit.

Men may come and men may go, but the nagging woman goes on forever.

AURORA AT VICTORIA

By Ward Muir

THE artistic temperament is accountable for much. Doubtless his possession of the artistic temperament accounted for the attire of Mr. William Bedale, since even on the sunniest of summer mornings a young gentleman of ordinary metropolitan tastes does not promenade through Piccadilly Circus clad in French "bloomer" knickerbockers and a soft shirt, of mauve tint, tied with a string at that point where a cravat is generally considered appropriate. Moreover, a loosely wrapped parcel (containing, to be exact, a set of pajamas) overflowed shamelessly from one of the pockets of Mr. William Bedale's jacket, while from the other protruded an unopened box of Henry Clay cigars.

Mr. William Bedale was indifferent to the surprised glances of the passing throng. Indeed, he was unaware of them. His heart sang in the sunshine, his step was light. What cared he for the West End and its opinions? He whistled as he walked. And no man who whistles while traversing Piccadilly Circus in bloomer knickerbockers has much to fear from conventionalists.

As he stepped onto the curb at the corner of lower Regent Street, a voice hailed him:

"Billy! I say, Billy!"

Mr. William Bedale, thus addressed, ceased whistling and took cognizance of an archaic four-wheeler, which had meandered tortuously through the press of traffic and halted beside him. From the window of the four-wheeler a head was projected and an arm gesticulated—the said organs belonging to Angus Macpherson, an old friend (if such a discrepant adjective as "old" could be applied

to one so essentially juvenile) from the School of Art.

"Hello, Mac!" quoth Bedale. "What meaneth this expensive and splendiferous equipage?" He indicated the cab, whose horse had already closed its eyes in apparent slumber.

"I have been taking a lady for a drive round the sights of town," responded Macpherson. "And the nuisance is"—he lowered his tone—"I can't pay the fare."

"Embarrassing, but not unprecedented," said Bedale, approaching the cab and peering in. "Introduce me, Mac."

The interior of the vehicle was obscure, for a drawn blind decorously veiled its opposite window. Bedale nevertheless perceived—but without astonishment, for he knew his Macpherson—that his friend's attire was no less inornate than his own. Macpherson wore a Norfolk shooting coat and white flannel trousers, and his head was crowned by an opera hat, which might have passed muster after dusk, but which in the glare of noon revealed itself as decidedly crinkled and shiny along the line of its springs. Behind Macpherson, in the cab, a vague white form, of oddly large proportions, glimmered indistinctly, loling in an inebriated attitude partly on the seat and partly on the floor.

"The lady—" queried Bedale.

"Yes—the lady is Aurora, goddess of something or other. I am too sick of her to recollect what she is goddess of." Macpherson jerked a contemptuous thumb toward his fellow passenger. "But, as I said before, I am now less concerned about the lady than about the fare."

Bedale leaned into the cab and surveyed Aurora—who proved to be a marble statue, something less than life size, and notable for a certain ingenious sparsity of clothing.

"I am delighted to make Miss Aurora's acquaintance," said Bedale—"or is she Mrs. Aurora? My knowledge of the classics is regrettably meager. So you're still pegging away at sculpture, Mac? This is your latest, eh? But why—if the question isn't impertinent—why are you indulging Miss—or Mrs.—Aurora in a trip round the sights of our beautiful capital?"

"I have been showing her, not the beautiful sights—not, at least, until we descried you, our rescuer, on the pavement—but the ugly ones," said Macpherson. "By heaven, she has today seen the most hideous sights not merely in London but in the world! Need I add that I refer to those wretched crawlers, those cumberers of the earth, who misname themselves art dealers?"

"Oho! You've been trying to sell Aurora? I sympathize. And no dealer was willing to kill the rest of his stock by accepting her?"

"My dear Billy, they're worms, these so-called dealers. Here have I been cruising about London all morning in this motheaten cab, trotting Aurora round from one beastly dealer to another beastlier—I've tried everybody from Chelsea to Bond Street, and not a soul of them will offer me even five bob for the thing. And the further I travel, the more delicate does my situation become. That's the peculiar thing about getting into a cab—there's no getting out again without paying the blooming fare. Yet—observe the anomaly—the longer you stay in, the more unpayable is the fare. Months hence Aurora and I and the cab will still be plodding forlornly on and on through the streets, piling up debt because I am unable to pay it."

"Perhaps the driver would accept Aurora in lieu of his fare?" suggested Bedale.

"Not he! He didn't even like to take her inside unless I pulled the blinds down. I engaged the cab by the hour

when I started, and I had precisely half a crown in my pocket. The first hour's up, ages ago; so, though I have heroically resisted the temptation to break into the half-crown for refreshments, I am already insolvent—and still have Aurora on my hands."

"A plaguey dilemma," Bedale sympathized.

"You see, it's this way," pursued Macpherson. "My landlady—"

"No need to say any more," Bedale interposed. "You have told me the whole story in one word."

"Precisely," groaned Macpherson. "Well, when I couldn't liquidate, she actually planted herself in front of my wardrobe and wouldn't let me change into something decent to come out. I couldn't even get a presentable hat. I managed to sneak this rotten gibus because it happened to be lying closed on my table, and when I picked it up she didn't realize that it was a hat at all. Anyhow, I said I'd sell the statue and come straight back and settle the bill." Macpherson sighed. "The one thing she didn't object to me taking away was the statue."

"These things will happen." Bedale was soothing. "But there is a solution of every problem in this universe, my good Mac. Fate has brought you to me, and lo, I am rolling in wealth! This is one day of all days in the year when, in meeting me, you meet a creature unafraid of creditors. I have just sold my last and ugliest poster to a fraudulent pill company. A ten-pound note—less the price of fifty excellent cigars—is in my pocket. At this moment I am en route for Victoria station, whence I propose to take a train somewhere—I don't quite know where—as the beginning of a few days' walking tour. Leafy lanes, little inns with red blinds shining in the twilight, procrastinations under the hedge with the cigar box and so forth—you know the sort of thing. With your permission I will join you and Aurora in this chariot. We shall drive together to Victoria—where I shall give myself the honor of squaring accounts with Jehu—we shall deposit Aurora in the left-luggage place, and you will accompany me

on the walking tour and shake off this nightmare of landladies and dealers under which you are at present oppressed."

"It's a cinch," shouted Macpherson, flinging open the door of the cab for Bedale.

"Drive to Victoria, cabby!" said Bedale.

The cabman grumbled. "I've druv all over the blessed town, and the 'orse's clean worn out; and I'm blowed if I know whether I'm to get my lawful fare at the end of it."

Bedale paused and drew the cigar box from his pocket. He prized the lid open with a penknife. "Have a weed, cabby," he said, handing it up.

The cabman brightened. "Now you're talkin'," he admitted, selecting a cigar and biting the end. "It's Victoria you want, is it? In a 'urry for a train? I'll buck up the old 'orse, never fear!"

"It is true," said Bedale, "that we are, in a sense, in a hurry for a train; but as we are not in a hurry for any particular train, we shall in nowise chafe if you refrain from unduly scourging your nimble quadruped." He entered the cab and closed the door behind him.

The cabman lit his cigar and gathered up the reins. "A queer lot, these hartists," he muttered philosophically. "Can't even talk English, mos' of 'em. But"—he puffed—"they do know a good cigar."

Blue clouds of aromatic incense issuing from the open windows of the cab betokened that his fares—with the exception of Aurora—were also sampling the Henry Clays.

Along Piccadilly, down St. James Street and past the palace the cab trundled; and presently it drew up in Victoria station. Having paid the fare, Bedale assisted Macpherson to lift Aurora forth and transport her to the left-luggage office.

An aged official eyed their offering dubiously from behind the counter of his den.

"I dunno but wot I oughtn't to take a thing like that there," he said slowly. "We ain't allowed to take just any stuff folks like to shove onto us, you know. This is called a 'cloak room,' you see,

and it ain't meant for—for"—he paused—"for noods."

"Do you mean that there's a regulation against your accepting works of art?" asked Macpherson.

"There is," said the aged official. "But that wouldn't stop me taking *this*."

"Rather a nasty one for you, Mac," grinned Bedale. He appealed to the official, who was leaning on his counter moodily contemplating Aurora and a semicircle of porters who had gathered as witnesses. "You aren't allowed to accept articles of value, then?"

"I'm not," agreed the official. "But that wouldn't stop me taking *this*."

"Another blow," said Macpherson ruefully. "What *does* stop you taking the statue, then?"

"It wouldn't look nice, some'ow, standing there in amongst the luggage," pronounced the official. "It's a nood, and it might attract attention. If it 'ad 'ad clo'es on, now—" He ruminated. "I'll tell you wot. Put some paper round it, and it'll be all right."

"Capital idea!" cried Macpherson. "Lend us a sheet of paper, will you?"

The official produced a large sheet of brown packing paper and a small length of string. The paper was somewhat insufficient, but when presently it had been tied in a long tube round Aurora's middle he seemed satisfied. Aurora's head and an outstretched benedictory arm sprouted from the top of the paper; her feet and the glimpse of ankles peeped from the bottom; but the guardian of the cloak room expressed no disapproval of these revelations. Aurora was therefore piloted into the enclosure and placed in a corner. Bedale paid the two-pence, a receipt was delivered by the official, the assemblage dispersed, and the two artists, having lit fresh cigars, departed to find a train.

The curtain thus descended on the first act of a comedy subsequently to become historic.

II

It came to pass that while Bedale and Macpherson—the latter still wearing a wilted opera hat—were tramping hap-

pily through Kentish hop fields, or sitting in front of wayside ale houses smoking a casual Henry Clay, the *Daily Wire*, brightest and best of halfpenny papers, achieved what is called in Fleet Street a "scoop."

The *Daily Wire* announced in delirious headlines the news of a very extraordinary burglary in Park Lane. The house which had been entered belonged to the transatlantic millionaire and art connoisseur, Otis C. Sandacre, whose museum of old masters was famed throughout Europe. This museum, attached to the house, had been broken into and one of its priceless treasures abstracted.

The theft of an *objet d'art* is no novelty; but this special theft was decidedly fantastic. For, instead of cutting from its frame one of the obviously portable canvases which hung on the walls of Mr. Sandacre's museum, the criminal had taken it into his plainly muddled head to remove—of all things—a statue—a heavy, cumbrous, clearly unnegotiable statue, the statue of Aphrodite, by Pelucini.

How the burglar or burglars had managed to remove such a load as the marble Aphrodite was a mystery, and a jolly good mystery, as the editor of the *Daily Wire* immediately remarked. That this paper should have obtained first news of so sensational an event was luck indeed. The *Daily Wire* must follow up its advantage.

As anyone is aware, it is a feature of modern journalism that the police are voluntarily aided—or otherwise—by the press. Brilliant young men from the *Daily Wire*, in pursuance of this laudable policy, scoured town and country in search of clues as to the whereabouts of the missing Aphrodite.

Mr. Augustus Binns, one of the acutest of these young men, was returning disheartened from his search, when, on going to the left-luggage repository at Victoria for the innocent purpose of retrieving an umbrella, he observed, over the shoulder of the official who served him, a—could his eyes be deceptive?—a statue, its extremities jutting, above and below, from a central crumpled tube of brown paper. The statue stood in an

ill lighted angle of the luggage room, and seemed to commune pensively with a shelf of hold-alls and kit bags.

Augustus Binns was cautious, though his pulse grew rapider.

"Seen the *Daily Wire* lately?" he said, in a conversational key.

Mr. Hickling, the aged official, replied in the negative. He never read the *Daily Wire*; and he intimated, perhaps unnecessarily, that humanity at large would be better and saner if they followed his example.

Augustus Binns, though shocked, had learned what he wanted to learn. He changed the subject.

"That's a queer thing you've got," he remarked, indicating the statue with his umbrella. "It's not often, I dare say, that you have a statue among your left luggage."

Mr. Hickling turned his head without enthusiasm and regarded the brown paper-draped Aurora. "The parties 'oo left it was queer, any'ow," he volunteered. "But," he went on judicially, "they gave me a rare good cigar, they did."

"When did they leave it?" asked Binns.

"Three days ago," said Mr. Hickling. "That was the eighteenth. They ain't been back since." Quite gratuitously he added: "I sha'n't be surprised if I never see 'em again, neither."

The eighteenth! Binns was delighted. The theft from Sandacre's had been committed on the night of the seventeenth—perhaps in the early morning of the eighteenth itself! Manifestly the thieves, finding themselves hampered by their impracticable booty, had adopted the simple plan of getting rid of it by depositing it in a railway station!

"What were the parties like who left the statue?" asked Binns.

"Two young blokes," was all that Hickling the unobservant could reply.

"May I go in and have a look at the statue?" said Binns.

Mr. Hickling shook his head. "Agin' the rules."

Binns fumbled in his pocket—to find that, after a day of heavy expenses, he had no cash.

"Sure you couldn't let me go in?" he pleaded. "I'm interested in—in art." Mr. Hickling would not be cajoled.

Binns stood talking for some little time, and cross-questioned his uninformative victim to the best of his ability—but with distressingly small results. Time was flying. Already the station clock pointed to a few minutes before midnight; the paper would soon be going to press with tomorrow's edition. Binns at last withdrew and fled on joyous footsteps toward Fleet Street. Once again, he felt, the police had been outstripped by the press.

Next morning, accordingly, the *Daily Wire* proclaimed that one of its "special investigators" had unraveled an important clue—the word "clue" was in capitals an inch long at the top of the column—to the vanished Aphrodite.

"Thanks to our perfect system of correspondents, who are trained to trace even the most obscure hints," said the *Daily Wire*, "we are in a position to state that a magnificent statue," ("magnificent" was a Binns word) "was deposited in the cloak room at Victoria station on the morning after the theft in Park Lane. The officials at Victoria are rightly reticent," (the tantalized Binns could have murdered Hickling, the one official he had interviewed)—"the officials are rightly reticent concerning the matter; but the significance of our announcement will nevertheless not be lost on the public. We do not assert, categorically, that the statue at Victoria is the Pelucini Aphrodite," (the editor thought it only safe to hedge, in advance, for his opinion of Binns's judgment of sculpture was not enormous)—"but we insist that a thorough investigation of this remarkable circumstance should be made by the police authorities, who have hitherto shown themselves so apathetic and so completely at fault."

It cannot be denied that the *Wire* had once again scored a "scoop."

The bewildered Hickling was besieged by inquisitive persons anxious to examine the statue; but, acting now under orders from his superiors, he would allow no one even to cast a glance inside the left-luggage deposit. Railway chiefs

and overseers, it is true, went in to enjoy a comfortable stare at Aurora; but except that she was a statue, and had been left the day after the burglary, they did not offer an opinion on her merits. All they knew was that the depositor of Aurora now owed the railway company fivepence; and unless he came and paid his fivepence she would not be surrendered.

Correspondence followed—very official in tone—the railway company on the one hand and the exasperated *Daily Wire* on the other. Finally Mr. Sandacre himself—a superb figure in a bearskin ulster and dangling a pair of motor goggles—arrived at Victoria, and—being a millionaire and an extensive railway station advertiser—was obsequiously afforded permission to view the abandoned statue.

It was a Sunday afternoon when Mr. Sandacre came to Victoria, and the station was nearly empty. Mr. Hickling was of course on duty; the station master, too, and a few porters. A train which had just arrived from the South contributed several idlers to the small crowd—and among them a wind-browed youth in a Norfolk jacket, rather grimy flannel trousers and an opera hat.

Remorse had stricken Macpherson and he had returned to London and to work. Not having seen a paper while in the wilds of Kent, he was unaware of Aurora's present notoriety, and intended merely to look in at the cloak room to make certain that she was not being damaged. He might or might not claim her—he had borrowed a sovereign from Bedale—but at least he would ascertain that she was safe and sound. So he approached Mr. Hickling's office—to find it surrounded by the aforementioned crowd.

A nasal and commanding voice—that of Mr. Sandacre—rose from the center of the crowd.

"It's not Aphrodite, of course," he was saying. "The journalist who mistook it for my Aphrodite must have been a dub. Why, even from the glimpse of the head and feet, he could have seen it wasn't Aphrodite or anything like her."

It looks a pretty decent piece, all the same. Let's have it out into the light so's we can see it properly. And take off that idiotic kilt of brown paper."

Mr. Hickling and a porter obediently placed Aurora on a truck and towed her out to the platform. The crowd, with the stupefied Macpherson in the front rank, formed a circle round the truck. Mr. Hickling climbed on to it and removed the brown paper wrapping, to a chorus of audible snickers.

Aurora emerged, pallid and serene, and gazed absently across the heads of the spectators at a distant placard depicting the latest corsets.

"By Jove," said Mr. Sandacre, standing back, "she's not so bad! Not so bad, by Jove! If I knew the sculptor who did this—"

"The young gent wot left this here statoo with me," Mr. Hickling asseverated, "is standing beside you, sir."

The millionaire whirled round and discovered Macpherson. The latter bowed blandly. "What all this fuss is about I'm bothered if I know," he said. "But I must admit I'm glad to see somebody appreciating my Aurora's points."

"You're the sculptor?" said Mr. Sandacre. His eyes twinkled as they traveled over Macpherson's attire, and a faint smile flitted across his face.

"I am," said Macpherson. "I have just come back from a walking tour, and was on the point of claiming the statue, which I left in the luggage place five days ago, having been unable previously to sell it. May I ask if—you're—a— a possible purchaser?"

Mr. Sandacre laughed. "My name's Sandacre," he said bluntly. "Yes, I'm a possible purchaser. But meanwhile

put your property back into the luggage place, and hop into my car, young man, and come to lunch. You have the right stuff in you if you're the fellow who made that statue; and if, as I should judge, you're hard up, Otis Sandacre's the man to help you. Come along."

Amid the applause of the crowd and speeded by the blessings of liberally tipped Mr. Hickling—who was replacing the brown paper—the millionaire and Macpherson beat a retreat to the former's automobile.

"As for those lunatics on the *Wire*," said Mr. Sandacre, as the car glided out from the station yard, "if they hadn't bothered me to death I'd have told them as I told the police—that the theft was a fake. My friend Krehl, of Berlin, has kept hammering away at me about the insecurity of my museum, so I laid a bet with him that he couldn't find a man to burgle it. He accepted; and he and his pet housebreaking expert were so cocky when they got in, in spite of my night watchman and electric alarms, that they deliberately took the most valuable and unportable thing—the statue—and ambled off with it in a van. My butler—who didn't know about the bet—appears to have turned an honest penny by communicating the news of the theft to some Fleet Street friend of his. The *Wire* story amused me, though, and simply out of curiosity I dropped in at Victoria to have a squint at the alleged Aphrodite. But never mind these explanations. Tell me about yourself, boy, and what you've been doing and what you want to do."

Whereupon Macpherson lifted his opera hat, wiped a perspiring brow and launched into the most delightful monologue of his life.



JEALOUSY is a green-eyed monster which attacks sharp-eyed men with bright-eyed wives.

THE Highbrow

By James L. Ford

HIGHBROWISM is a fungous growth on society often mistaken for real learning or achievement. It owes its existence to the craze for serious matters like municipal politics, the higher intellectual drama and the condition of the working classes that of recent years has diverted the thoughts of a vast number of women from bonnets, bridge, automobiles and Lenten classes.

Whenever the changing conditions of our complex civilization create a need, Nature is always quick to supply it; and so it happened that when women of the "brilliant" brand looked around for someone in trousers with whom they could hold intellectual converse, the pungent fumes of culture filled the air and straightway the highbrow appeared before them like the genii from its bottle.

One of the greatest of modern novelists once wrote a book to show what manner of man an egoist is and wherein he differs from an egotist. Shall it not be permitted then to an humbler scribe to devote a few pages to an exposition of highbrowism, to explain how it differs from true learning and why its prophets should not be confounded with men of genuine thought and accomplishment?

It is eminently fitting, moreover, that I should be the one to write this chronicle, for I was present at the dinner that gave to the town the first of its highbrows and started the craze for toying with artistic and intellectual problems that is still raging like a forest fire in our best society. I was a guest on that fateful night when Kate Smithers, at that time a most charming and ingenuous creature, with deep blue eyes and a small round head like a cocoanut—but now, alas, one of the most brilliant

women in society—dealt a knockdown blow over the solar plexus of innocent dinner table merriment by suddenly asking the man on her left what he thought of Kant's "Critique on Pure Reason."

Some day—it will not be soon; somewhere—it will certainly not be in New York—Miss Smithers will put that question to someone who has read that abstruse book, and then the bubble of reputation which has kept her afloat these many summers on a sea of fashionably intellectual glory will collapse, and she will sink beneath the waves of the society which she adorns, to be seen, and listened to, and admired by women, and feared and fled from by sagacious men, no more again forever.

Those who glean their ideas of New York society from a hysterical press, and a school of fiction that is quite as hysterical and even more mendacious, imagine that it is given over entirely to frivolity. But we have only to attend a revel leavened with the uplifting yeast of highbrowism to realize that the Four Hundred, like the undertaker and the coroner, has its serious and even melancholy moments.

It was in one of these moments that Miss Smithers put her awful question to the unsuspecting rodent on her left, causing the fork to fall from his nerveless grasp while a solemn hush descended upon the little company.

Now this young man was a native Bostonian, just beginning to frequent the haunts of metropolitan fashion, and finding it a difficult nut to crack, for his chief equipment was a vapid mind, highly educated; and that, as we all know, bears little fruit save those Dead

Sea apples, conceit and stupidity. In his efforts to fit himself with a pose suited to the tastes and idea of the fashionable women with whom he wished to consort, he had essayed many of the lighter conversational topics, only to find himself beaten at the game by others of greater knowledge and nimbler wit. But now the sight of this brilliant company stricken dumb before an empty allusion to German metaphysics told him that his opportunity had come, and he quickly recovered himself and made answer that, although he did not regard Kant's work as quite sound in its philosophy, he was quite sure that Matthew Arnold was in reality the Pagan Greek that he seemed to be.

By this time the rest of us had begun to suspect that something of an intellectual nature was happening, and I, realizing with quick perspicacity that the time was ripe for action, threw myself into the breach, crying: "Do you think that Bernard Shaw is really sincere?"

This was in the very early days of the Shaw craze, and I honestly believe that I originated the query about his sincerity that has since become so hackneyed that it is known as the "idiot's gambit." But it never fails to make a brave showing when sprung upon highbrow circles where it takes equal rank with Ibsen as "a slice of human life"—an ever green observation that may well be termed the "*arbor vite* of literary discourse."

Our little dinner table talk passed so quickly that we scarcely understood what was happening; nor did we comprehend the importance of the utterances that I have quoted or dream of their far reaching consequences. I noticed, however, that Miss Smithers's sweetly simple face took on a new life as the conversation soared toward the ceiling, and that there came into the depths of her great trusting blue eyes a suggestion of intellectual rhapsody which puzzled me, until the party broke up and, the night being warm and still and the sky serene and starry, she dismissed her carriage and asked me to walk home with her.

"Didn't you notice," she exclaimed the instant we left the house, "how re-

freshing it was when I gave the talk a serious turn tonight? I did it purposely, and I assure you that I was not only surprised but delighted, too, to notice how readily you fell into the spirit of the thing. Your remark about Bernard Shaw fairly made the conversation sparkle."

I pricked up my ears at Miss Smithers's words, for I had a strong liking for this frank, warm-hearted, ingenuous woman, whose manner of looking out through wide open eyes of deepest blue upon this great, hard, cold, round world of ours had often proved a source of mild amusement to me. Moreover, she had more than once invited me to dinner, and was always an intent and flattering listener when I touched upon the frothy, bubbling, gossiping, unstable world of theater, newspaper office and studio that is so attractive to those who either know it not at all or else know it very well. Besides, at this period of my life what I thought was a Heine-like cynicism still held its sway over me, and I rather prided myself on saying that a pretty woman was none the worse for being a bit of a fool. Years afterward I learned—with feelings of mortification and rage that may be easily imagined—that, while I was pluming myself on my cheap smartness, Miss Smithers, the target of my bright, cynical wit, was going about declaring that I was an "interesting man"—the term was not as opprobrious then as she herself has since helped to make it—and wondering why I was not asked out more in the best society.

"Ever since I first began to go out," continued Miss Smithers, after waiting to allow the full significance of her remark to sink into my brain, "I have felt that society was unsatisfying. When I returned home from even the most brilliant dinner or reception it was with a sense of time wasted, an evening mispent and sometimes a perceptibly loosened moral or intellectual fiber. Nearly every woman friend that I had shared my belief that we of the supposedly fortunate and unquestionably fashionable world were not getting the enjoyment out of life that we deserved. The little uplift in our talk tonight has made a deep

impression on me. Good night. I hope to see more of you now, and I mean to give a dinner very soon and invite you and that brilliant man from Boston."

As I was slowly making my way homeward with mind aflame at the brilliant social prospects that were unfolding before me, I overtook the young man who had "called the turn" on Matthew Arnold with so much brightness and originality. He was walking just ahead of me, his hands clasped behind him and his head bent down after the manner of one in profound thought.

"Culture!" I heard him murmur. "That's mother's milk to us Bostonians!"

"What's that about culture?" I demanded, as I came up behind him.

"Culture," he replied, still speaking as if to himself, and not even looking around to see who had addressed him, though it is quite likely that he recognized my voice—"culture is the lifeboat in which the poor earthworm may safely float among the brass pots of plutocracy on the troubled waters of metropolitan society. I am going to launch myself in it without delay."

And so it came to pass that that historic dinner not only gave an impetus to what passes for serious thought but also quickened into life the seeds of ambition in this young man's breast and transformed him into a highbrow, the first of the long line of solemn, queer-looking bipeds that have been harassing the town ever since.

It may be that I have dwelt at unnecessary length on the insignificant happening from which highbrowism sprang. Some of my readers may think that I have said too much about Miss Smithers—in my opinion too much cannot be said about that naïve, sympathetic and adorable woman—and laid undue emphasis on the sparkling conversation that turned her thoughts in a serious direction; but when we consider the magnitude of the subject, the extraordinary spread of highbrowism to all parts of the country and the race of respected highbrows developed by it, I feel that no incident connected with the inception of this important movement is

too trivial to be neglected. Indeed, I make no doubt that future historians will deal with the rise of highbrowism far more exhaustively than I have, and that the house in which Kant's "Critique" was first sprung upon the awe-struck company, and even the very dining room which echoed to my Bernard Shaw cry, will be carefully preserved by the historical society as a shrine for future generations of the serious-minded.

I have said that the original highbrow was queer-looking. He has long since disappeared from the scenes that he once adorned, but I distinctly remember his domelike forehead, wide flapping ears and fishy eyes—a facial combination seldom seen. So remarkable were his physical characteristics, and so closely were they identified with his fame as a man of intellect, that the belief soon came to be accepted that the one could not exist without the other, and from that day to this New York has never accorded full recognition to any highbrow of ordinary aspect.

Another invariable earmark of the highbrow is his paucity of real achievement. Men both great and wise lived and died before he was ever thought of, but it was not for them that the term "highbrow" was coined. The real Simon pure specimen does not invent a telephone or build a bridge across the East River or direct great enterprises or write good plays or good books or compose music. If he were really to accomplish anything of practical value he would cease to be a prophet. Moreover, his attitude must be invariably one contemptuous of success. His school of thought is one that sneers at all recognized achievement and glorifies the undeserving. Therefore, no matter what form of learning the highbrow may affect or what theories he may advance concerning literature, art, the drama, Socialism, politics or any of the other matters of which he loves to discourse, we may be quite sure that we are not listening to one speaking with authority. I really do not know what measure of contempt and reproach the followers of Kate Smithers would mete out to a highbrow

known to have written a single witty line, to have correctly drawn the human hand, to have led a political party, benefited the poor or been able to recognize at first sight any form of artistic real merit.

There is one art, however, in which the highbrow excels, and that is getting into society. Eating, talking and listening to the utterances that fall from sweet feminine lips are all subsidiary to that. He will get into society even if he is obliged to shed human blood in the scramble.

True to her promise, Miss Smithers gave a serious dinner to which both the highbrow and myself were invited, and at which scant attention was paid to my bright and witty conversation, so intense was the interest in the native Bostonian. Much as I disliked him, candor compels me to say that in the art of uttering platitudes in a most serious and convincing manner, he revealed on this occasion talents of the very highest order. I cannot remember all that he said, but I know that his words made a profound impression on everyone present. He said that the pool rooms were a great evil, and that cigarette smoking was bad for very young boys; and his enunciation of these novel theories brought forth a murmur of "How very interesting!"

In the *conversazione* that ensued after we had left the dining room, I sat in a corner unobserved while the highbrow talked. And although I left early, in great bitterness of spirit, I heard him receive no less than three invitations from women who saw in him a strong attraction for their dinner tables.

Within a month the highbrow was addressing meetings of every sort and description and rapidly acquiring fame. As he always took pains to sit in front of the platform where the newspaper artists could obtain a good view of his profile, his queer-looking face, which anyone could draw, was always included in the "group of notables on the platform" with which many of the accounts were illustrated. It was this circumstance that first revealed to me one of the great advantages in an unusual cast of countenance.

But, after all, the highbrow deserves to be treated as a class rather than as an individual, for the history of the first of the species has been repeated in so many instances that the type has come to be generally recognized, though I firmly believe that I am the first philosopher in the town to study and discuss it in detail.

In the present stage of his development, the highbrow is a distinct social force to be reckoned with. Only the most frivolous company may be called complete that does not boast his presence. In his dull lexicon, boredom and excellence are synonymous terms; although his favorite subjects for lighter discourse are literature, art and the drama, it is unworthy of his pose to commend anything that is really enjoyable or entertaining or funny. He regards reading as a task rather than a pleasure, and tells you what he has read with the pride of a woodchopper reciting his winter's tale of innumerable cords split and sawed. He affects abstruse philosophy, and is afraid to speak of fiction because it savors of enjoyment rather than culture. And he sneers at all native output save that of Henry James, which the masses can never be expected to understand. He reads Meredith, too—George, not Owen, mind you, for he knows the difference and you can't fool him—and always from the edition with the author's name printed large on the outside, the one so popular on shipboard where a quiet daily bluff counts. He reads Shaw, too, but is no more capable of understanding him than the affable English vote seeker in "John Bull's Other Island" is able to understand the delightful Irish humor that he talks about so genially. He also admires certain modern Irish bards, but knows nothing of Mangan, Davis or Moore. Indeed, it is pleasant to think that those true Irish bards, with their typically Celtic qualities of rhythm and sentiment, of song, rich in tuneful words and with delicate melancholy underlying its humor, have not yet been put to the debasing work of pushing the highbrow societyward.

The highbrow discusses Verlaine, but

not Alphonse Daudet, and not one of his kind has ever read "Le Siège de Berlin." He has long since learned to despise Tennyson, and tradition says that one of his kind once quoted a verse from Longfellow, believing it to have been written by Tolstoy, and, having discovered his mistake, went out and hanged himself, as befitted a Judas caught in treachery to his pose.

I sometimes wonder why he never speaks of the Rollo books, those masterpieces of simple American fiction, as full of purpose and moral as "The Pilgrim's Progress," and told so clearly and exhaustively that no question that the inquisitive brain of childhood can frame remains unanswered on their pages! Had Jacob Abbott lived to collaborate with Henry James, the great American novel might not have remained unwritten.

And surely there should be someone to celebrate the sturdy tread of those rugged consonants that march on and on down the pages of the English primer, carrying their simple message of happening or thought in words that had grown gray in the service of honest English speech long before the Norman conquest—words whose meaning not even the humblest intelligence can miss!

"Lo, the ox doth go!" "Now we do go up!" We listen in vain at highbrow gatherings for praise of these models of English prose composition.

But if Rollo and the Primer elude his understanding, fairy legendry has not been so fortunate, for despite its age, beauty, the universal love and respect which it commands and many another quality which ought to render it safe from defiling hands, the highbrow long ago marked it for his prey. Its dried skin has been stripped of all its loveliness, stretched and nailed tight across his door, and marked "Folklore" as a warning to all other living beautiful things not to cross his path. What shall we say of this rape of those ancient tales to which cling so many sweet childish fancies, and of him who deliberately strips them of all the poetry, romance and tenderness of their native fairyland? Is it not enough that we have sat by

while he gathered in Ibsen, Browning, Shaw and many another good one that we must needs permit him to pick the bones of "Goody Two Shoes," "Jack the Giant Killer" and "Hans and Gretchen"?

The Irish peasant tells us that the "good people" who haunt moonlit glen and meadow will hold converse with none but the innocent and pure of heart, and that the only mortals privileged to enter fairyland are children. What would he say to this desecration of an immortal imagery for the purpose of pushing the highbrow into the best society?

The highbrow is perhaps at his best in his attitude toward the theater, his contention being that playgoing is not a pleasure but a scheme for the absorption of culture to be exuded subsequently at afternoon teas. He is quite firm in the belief that the only good plays are those that fail to please the public, or, in other words, that the only good marksmen are the ones who miss the target. Above all, he admires those dramas which, like the shots of the untrained soldier who fires at the moon instead of the enemy, are "above the heads of the people." His distinguishing earmark, however, is the faculty for missing the true inwardness of everything, including even that which he reluctantly consents to praise.

He lectures in drawing rooms on the Elizabethan drama, and is loud in praise of the heroines of Shakespeare, the philosophy and literary quality of the great dramatist's work, but he knows nothing of the "stage carpentry," as he would contemptuously term it, that keeps his plays alive to the present day.

In like manner he misses the genius of Ibsen, much as he may talk about his symbolism. He praises Sudermann largely because he is a foreigner, but sees no difference between the motive that makes "Magda" powerful and impressive, and the miserably sordid amour—"a noble sin" he calls it—of "Es Lebe das Leben." He has long since discovered that it is safe to praise the German stage, but if he only knew how to laugh as do the wise Germans at their own splendid comedies and farces, he would

cease to be the highbrow that he is. A predilection for evil smelling playhouses in the foreign quarters of the town is a factor of no small importance in his pose, and he is to be found wherever a company speaking any language other than our own has pitched its tents. Here, too, he brings his little bands of female admirers, to whom he points out such objects of interest as the elevated railway, the approach to the Brooklyn Bridge and the old milestone near Spring Street, very much as the Reverend Mr. Honeyman used to point out to his flock the various landmarks that dotted the route from his wine shop chapel to the gates ajar.

There is no highbrow living who knows the difference between acting and imitating. I once went to see a Yiddish Shylock, who had been rescued by the efforts of advanced highbrowism from his ill smelling environment on the Bowery and brought uptown for a special matinee, that we might learn what we miss by living above Eighth Street. During the entire play the air resounded with croakings about this player's "marvelous fidelity to nature," "repressed emotion," "impeccable artistry" and "perfect naturalism." And yet not one of these wiseacres discovered that the Yiddish exotic was not an actor but an imitator, and that his equipment was nothing more than a collection of those mannerisms of speech, face and gesture with which the impersonators of the variety stage have long since made the public familiar.

Curiously enough, the stage highbrow is nearly always of Parisian training and experience. I have never been able to

discover why four years spent at the Beaux Arts, in the midst of a people whose capacity for enjoyment is their strongest racial characteristic, should change a possible carpenter into a confirmed highbrow, incapable of doing anything with his hands or brain, and boasting of his inability to enjoy anything in his own land. Reared in the dull fog of London, he is not nearly such a somber, fun hating ass as when trained under sunny Parisian skies, where the drama in its best and wittiest form flourishes as nowhere else in the world.

According to highbrow philosophy, a long course of attendance at the Comédie Française, so far from teaching us how to appreciate and to enjoy the stage, renders us incapable of recognizing merit of any kind, and compels us to go about forever after shuddering over the crudeness of native American art.

There are other themes of more somber import than art and letters that have come under the spell of highbrow thought. Socialism is one of these. It has given us the teacup or parlor Socialist, a distinct variety of highbrow who utters warning cries about the coming revolution and is fierce in his denunciation of the class which supplies him with champagne and terrapin. He is believed to have exerted a powerful influence over the lower classes, and is a figure of no small importance at the kettledrums of the serious-minded.

His march into society lies over smooth and pleasant routes, for it is of him that women say: "That man is a serious menace to society. We must ask him to dinner."



THERE is nothing new under the sun. Even our method of illumination by electricity is literally old as the hills. Mt. Ararat had an ark light on it.



THE head of the family usually foots the bills.

SONGS OF A SYRIAN LOVER

By Clinton Scollard

I LOVE the sunlight on the palms,
The moonlight on Lake Gennesar;
I love the golden morning calms,
The violet-tinted vesper star;

Yea, all things lovely, all things fair—
But ever most doth me beguile
The twilight glamour of her hair,
The dawning radiance of her smile!

II

Viol string and dulcimer,
Nay, their music's not for me!
Just the liquid voice of her
Makes my melody.

Plaintive pleadings of the lute,
Quiverings of the zither chord—
Nay, her lips, though they be mute,
They are my reward!

III

My olives waver in the wind,
With green and silver for their wear;
Yes, every little dervish leaf
Steps to a frolic, featsome air.

My olives waver in the wind;
They sway and beck and bow above;
Yet not one little dervish leaf
Is light of foot as is my love!

IV

Safe guided by the pharos fire,
No deep barque now puts into Tyre.

Laden with store of precious bales,
No trireme swift for Sidon sails.

THE SMART SET

In Tarsus town no crowded quays
Tempt the rich traders from the seas.

But with my hopes for treasure trove
My heart makes for the port of Love!

V

Amid the ruined fanes of Baal
What should prevail but brooding gloom?
The shrine is riven, and riven the veil;
The land is but an empty tomb.

And yet why should I heed it all—
A worship that has left no wraith?
Love lights the past—its ashen pall—
My solace and my altar faith!



SIGNPOSTS ALONG THE WAY

By James P. Richardson

JOY consists chiefly in freedom from anxiety.

To succeed, you should have your business go like clockwork; but this doesn't mean "tick-tick."

It isn't enough to hit the nail on the head—there must be some force behind the blow.

We often flatter ourselves that we resemble some great man, when we merely possess one of his faults.

The greatest fault a man can have is to have no faults.

One man lacks the hammer to forge the links of success; another lacks the anvil; most of us lack the necessary fire.

Rustling petticoats have often been more influential in a nation's history than thundering cannon.

A man never realizes how much he admires blondes until he marries a brunette.

THE PEARLS AND THE SWINE

By Mary Brent Whiteside

FROM Marcella Grace to Dorothy Porter.

MY PRECIOUS DORRIE:

One passage from that adorable letter of yours is burned into my brain in words of fire. It was positively an inspiration on your part, *amie du cœur*. How else could it have entered your darling head to write to me: "Dear child, if you find yourself in an uninspiring atmosphere, rise above it! Shake off the fetters of chance and create a new atmosphere congenial to yourself."

Dorrie, I don't know where you found such gems of wisdom, but it's come to me as a clear duty to do something to improve my present dreadful environment, and at the same time to elevate the inhabitants of Scranburn. I want to try to lift them out of the little sordid pettiness of their lives and turn their thoughts into higher channels. And just as I was cudgeling my brain to know how I should go about this work, a very beautiful thing occurred. A new man arrived. Yes, *chérie*, a real *man*—intellectual and cultivated and profoundly deep and clever. He's come here, he says, for "both a mental rest and a moral stimulus." I can't quite make him out, but you can see that he's subtly analyzing you all the time, and he smiles a "deep, inscrutable smile," as people do in books.

Only think, friend of my heart, what a staring contrast he must be to these country clods—these human moles, who actually sit in one's parlor and discuss Berkshire hogs and boll weevils, instead of subjects like we were used to at school—things like social psychology or the philosophies of Shaw and Ibsen. Only fancy, dearest, the pain of an ar-

tistic temperament like yours and mine, forced to exist among people who discourse on pig raising—swine! Positively, I'm resolved never to taste another particle of ham as long as I live!

But oh, *amie très adorée*, we can always go into the Silence, and get an answer to the questionings of our souls! This time, it seems to me, my answer came through you; and in creating this new atmosphere, as you suggest, I've surely found my mission. It's not to be a selfish work, either; it's not to be just for Marcella Grace; it's to take in the whole community. You see, in doing this thing for myself, I hope I shall help other people find themselves, too. Isn't that a beautiful thought?

I'm determined that my life work in general shall be the intellectual uplift of this neighborhood, and I think the young man whom I mentioned can be induced to help. To come straight to the point, *Dorrie mia*—I am going to establish a salon! More soon, from

Your devoted,

MARCELLA.

P. S.—I forgot to tell you his name is Stanley Trevan. Full of character, isn't it?

From the same to the same.

BLESSED GIRL:

I'm snatching the earliest possible moment to tell you about the first meeting of the salon, just as you asked me to do, Dorrie dear. Now I suppose you can't expect the very beginning of anything to be exactly perfect. It was my idea that we should organize ourselves into a real *société littéraire*, and discuss all sorts of significant subjects, from the art of Rodin (you know how I adored his

dear, queer pieces at the Metropolitan) to psychotherapy. But the people all had the haziest, muddleddest notion about what they were expected to do!

Now I had told them each one, quite privately, to look up something interesting and important, and tell it to somebody else at the salon—something of world wide significance, you know. But, dear heart, they said the *queerest* things! And they all looked so hopelessly self-conscious and silly. There wasn't one particle of "atmosphere" about it!

Now, when I first told Mr. Trevan about my plan for the salon, he didn't seem very much impressed.

"A salon?" he said, with a funny little look at me. "Rather un-American, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes," I told him; "it's quite French, but it's so broadening, you know; and I don't think we ought to be too proud to borrow ideas from other countries occasionally, if they are good ones."

I couldn't quite hear what he said to that, because he stuck his face in his handkerchief, but I made out something about my "casting my pearls before swine."

Well, to cut short a long story, he came last night to the salon, and would you believe it, *chère amie*, he was quite enthusiastic over the way things went off—after I thought it was all such a failure, too, and was feeling almost disconsolate.

"Bully idea of yours, Miss Grace," he cried, shaking my hand; "keep it up, by all means!"

I was so delighted, I felt all foolish and choky. "It's awfully good of you," I said, trying not to seem *too* grateful about it. "And you'll help me systematize things, won't you, and straighten out some of these people? They seem so dreadfully chaotic, you know."

And he smiled again, and said so cordially: "Surely, I will. Surely."

So, after all, Dorrie dear, I went to bed with a little ray of comfort in my soul concerning my *chef-d'œuvre*—my *magnum opus*.

Your aspiring,

MARCELLA.

From Stanley Trevan to Thornton Elder.

FRIEND THORNTON:

Maybe I've fallen from heaven, as you lately took occasion to inform me, but I'll spare you a too obvious pun by just telling you at once that the girl's last name is Grace! In love? Lord, no! Whatever I am, I'm not primeval. We can thank our stars for belonging to the present effete generation, which dissects its own mental workings. What I mean to say is, I've found a situation. Lord knows, we needed one, you and I! "Nothing new under the sun," I was saying to myself, which was not exactly original, and shows what bad habits I was getting into.

Now the field's got to be worked logically. Haste makes waste. In the meantime, I'm going to help the above mentioned little girl conduct a salon. It's going to be like the French ones in the days when the Bourbon chaps had their innings.

No, no, my boy, this is on the level. This is too serious a matter for any joshing. Don't you wish you knew more about it? Don't worry; your part in this game is going to fit you like a glove—so compose your soul in patience, until you hear more from

Your faithful,

S. T.

From the same to the same.

GOOD OLD THORN:

If you had been present during my last passage at arms with the fairest of the Graces, you would surely have betrayed us both and the game would have been up. Of course it's a shame, but what would you have? If a chap went through the world thinking only about other people's rights, he'd land in a Refuge for the Unfit. You see, the world isn't built that way, and at present I'm not going to set about reconstructing it.

Well, my little Grace proposed that we should fix one particular topic of conversation for the next salon and notify all participants in advance. Now have you duly read, marked, and inwardly digested that word, "salon," Thorn? Ponder on it! Not a club, not a society, not a fraternity, not even a coterie—but

a *salon*! Shades of Voltaire! The ghosts of the eighteenth century France must be having some bad moments!

But she's a nice girl, you scoff. I tell you, she's altogether a nice girl, and I like her, for all that!

"How would Italian Art of the Renaissance do," she suggested, "for our next subject?"

"Admirably," I assented quickly—"only I know so much about it already, I should be profoundly bored."

She looked puzzled. You see, she's a bit shy on humor; but that's a superfluous statement, for otherwise she would never have established a salon.

"I believe you are an artist yourself," she declared, "only you're keeping it a secret; and you couldn't afford to give away your professional thunder, could you?"

Don't laugh. I tell you that was a near—clever speech!

"I want to oblige you," I said, "but let's discuss something more up to the moment."

"Do you think Psychical Research would be good?" she wanted to know.

"My dear young lady," I said hurriedly, "all the poor old ghosts are being dragged about by the scruff of the neck these days and X-rayed, and investigated, until there won't be an illusion left. A scientific ghost is a thing to be deplored. Let's be more original!"

"Woman Suffrage, perhaps?" she ventured next.

I cried for mercy!

"Well," she tried again, nothing daunted, "there's a good play coming the first of next week, and everybody's going. We might analyze that play. *Anybody* can do that!"

"Surely, surely!" I returned heartily. "The play's the thing!"

Then she came back at me with: "Have you studied the drama very much yourself? Most people of broad culture do these days."

I reassured her. "Don't know a ghost of a thing about it," I said. "I want to learn." And I do! Catch?

Your sincerest,

S. T.

From Marcella Grace to Dorothy Porter.
DEAR FRIEND—WHO—ALWAYS—UNDERSTANDS:

I've turned into an amateur detective. I've been trying to sound the depths of Mr. Stanley Trevan's mind and discover his vocation. He's an enigma! He's so deep and clever and subtle that everybody in Scrانبurn has long given him up as an unfathomable mystery—except little inquisitive me. Last night I think I reached the solution. I did, Dorrie dear, but I'm not going to be conceited and boast about it. Instead, I feel quite humble. It's said that people always feel humble when they achieve something really notable.

Last night Mr. Trevan and I went to see the only good play that's come to this sequestered spot in more than two long years. Mr. Trevan's a painter. He would talk about "atmosphere" and a "color" and "proportion" and "unity," and things like that, instead of about the awfully clever epigrams the leading man was getting off. Then he said quite sharply and suddenly: "Women can *inspire*, but they can never really *create*."

Didn't that seem narrow? I felt my face burn, but I couldn't be exactly rude, for there I was sitting in the seat he had paid for!

"Wouldn't you be content to inspire a masterpiece, Miss Grace?" he asked, in that eager little way he has.

"Oh, if I could, Mr. Trevan!" I said.

"You are the kind of woman who surely would prove an artistic inspiration," he answered.

"But how?" I insisted.

"I should picture you," he began, with an awful poetic look on his face, "as 'The Woman Who Aspired.' I should depict your struggle, your courage—your success. Perhaps it won't be quite the kind of success you are looking for, but it will be the right kind none the less, for success is the only ultimate possibility."

Wasn't that wonderful, Dorrie? Think of inspiring an artist to a masterpiece like that! Nobody else in the world has ever understood me so well. I'm beginning to have more confidence in myself, *m'amie*, and to think that there is

some reason for my existing, and that I wasn't just a "work of supererogation on the part of the Almighty," as some awfully clever pessimist called himself. And in the meantime I believe the next salon is going to be a monumental triumph!

Your hopeful and devoted,
MARCELLA.

From Stanley Trevan to Thornton Elder.
DEAR THORN IN THE FLESH:

In spite of all my protestations, you hasten, you jostle, you discompose me! I can't hurry, I tell you; it's a brand new thing, and it's got to have time to mellow and mature. And then I'm getting real color and detail that I'd never be able to evolve from this sluggish brain.

Did you project your astral self upon the scene of our second salon? I hope so. You must have learned things never dreamed of by men or angels. A score of gaping rustics—a hurly-burly of country dentists and village shopkeepers and nondescripts "analyzing" a recent drama of ideas! And chief among them, like a rose in a wilderness of cabbages, moved Her Serene Highness, The Woman Who Aspired! (There you are! What think you of the title?) Outwardly, I was decorous to the verge of imbecility. Inwardly, I was consumed by a devastating flame of mirth. Some of the old ladies are concerned over this dry little cough of mine, which afflicts me at frequent intervals.

Now, then, for a confession, Thorn, and it's on the level. I'm actually enjoying myself!

S. T.

From the same to the same.
HORRIBLE HUSTLER:

I'm coming next week! Do you get that? Now don't alarm this peaceful village by sending any more dispatches. They disturb the operator's slumbers. And I don't want to read them—my mind's tired. I suppose it's the season of the year or something.

Miss Grace looks awfully pretty in pale violet. There's something sort of appealing about that color, don't you

think? Suggests old-fashioned kind of things with a sweet smell. What'd you say? Of course not! I've worked it all out quite dispassionately and from a purely unbiased point of view.

The life here is good for my health. I'm flourishing like a green bay tree, and I don't want to be cut down before my time. Why can't you have a little more patience?

But perhaps I've already outstayed my usefulness since Miss Grace has got this salon business fairly on its feet. And, to the bucolic mind, the thing's a record smashing success. Pity there isn't a box office attached!

In haste,
S. T.

From Marcella Grace to Dorothy Porter.
DEAR SILLY:

How perfectly absurd of you! Suppose I *did* say I'd missed him? One does miss a person, when he's been a kind of partner and all that, you know. And our working together for the salon *did* make us see a good deal of each other, of course. And I hope I'm broad-minded enough, Dorothy of my heart, to admit right here and now, and to go on record as saying, that a great deal of the success of the salon has been due to Mr. Trevan's really inspiring presence. He certainly is a young man with a very masterful and uncommon intellect, and so much temperament! He'll be famous one of these days—just you see if, he isn't! But I'm not in love with him *chérie*, not in the least—else I couldn't write about him so calmly and dispassionately, could I?

You see, it's not my place to go falling in love, precious, for what would become of my work, I'd like to know—my work for Scranburn? There are some of us, you know, who have to go through life without those things that fall to the lot of other women. And you know, when you have temperament, you chafe at the thought of being dominated by any masculine person—even if he *does* happen to be clever!

No, Mr. Trevan was the right man to help me start the Scranburn salon—it was divinely ordered, and lo, he fell from

the clouds at the psychological moment, that's all.

In the meantime, *amie du cœur*, I'm waiting in a very frenzy of impatience to hear more from Mr. Trevan's great work, "The Woman Who Aspired." Of course it seems a little funny that he didn't ask me for any sittings or anything like that, but, you see, it's the *soul* he wanted, not just the outward form. I suppose he uses sort of psychological methods.

Oh, Dorrie dear, when I think of being the acknowledged inspiration of a man like that—to have him understand so perfectly the meaning of this work I'm trying to do—it makes all the world seem wonderful, and I feel so little and grateful and humble!

Your devoted,

MARCELLA.

From the same to the same.

DEAREST:

It can't be! There must be some mistake! Of course it's a perfectly extraordinary coincidence, and I'm just crazy about coming to New York to visit you and see the play. I suppose there are *two* Mr. Trevans, but it does seem funny that both of them should have thought of that selfsame title, "The Woman Who Aspired," and that one of them should be a dramatist. Maybe they are cousins or something, and Mr. Trevan No. 2 borrowed his title from the other. On my word of honor, the Scrانburn one didn't know a solitary thing about the drama—he acknowledged himself that he didn't.

Oh, I can just hardly wait to see you, *amie très adorée!* What precious confidences we shall have, soul to soul! In the meantime that play keeps cropping up in my mind in such an uncomfortable way! It troubles me!

Your impatient,

MARCELLA.

P. S.—Will wire you what train to meet.

Oh, I can't get my thoughts off it, Dorrie! Is it a nice kind of play? But do you think a gentleman would do a thing like that—pretend that he was an artist, I mean, and then— No, I take

that back. He didn't pretend that he was an artist; he didn't say what he was, but he knew I *thought* he was an artist, and he didn't correct me, and that was deceitful—that is, if this Mr. Trevan is the same as that one, it is.

Only look how muddled I'm getting, and just think how they used to praise my themes in the English class! And then penmanship! My hand is shaking. If he's a playwright, why didn't he say so? But if it's so, there's nothing to get nervous about, is there? When I think about it calmly, I suppose he has a right to be a dramatist if he wants to, and to call his play by any old name he pleases!

MARCELLA.

From the same to the same.

DEAREST OF FRIENDS:

Well, it's all over, and here I am back in Scrانburn, with my illusions all lying about me in shattered fragments. I shall never be happy again! Even now I can hardly believe it was true, and that that unspeakable person called Stanley Trevan could have taken advantage of what I thought was friendship, and used me and my Scrانburn friends as the subjects of his low comedy wit! For they *are* my friends, Dorrie—the only ones I have in the world—except you. And I love them, and don't like to see them insulted and held up to jeers and ridicule like that!

How in the world the papers can speak of it as a great success I can't conceive. And when they say, "It palpitates with reality," why, that's the most horrible thing of all! To think of seeing my poor little salon and my parlor—yes, Dorrie dear, that was my own unmistakable parlor—there on the stage!

You needn't tell me it was just a good-natured study of a dear, nice girl who had mistaken her vocation, and was just domestic and commonplace, instead of clever and talented, and that he's treated his heroine with a "sort of humorous affection"! Good gracious! I suppose if that dreadful person were married, he'd torture his wife to death by slow stages and call it "humorous affection"!

I tell you, it was absolutely insulting—

it was criminal! And we were so nice to him here in Scrانburn! Thank heaven, he left mother out of his villainous old play. I suppose he just couldn't put her in, after she'd asked him to supper so many times and all that. And then those stupid things he made the heroine say! I said them myself—he got them down word for word; but, Dorrie, I didn't say them *that way*! Those things about my life work—they were serious things, and there he twisted them round so that dreadful audience snickered. I felt as conspicuous as if I were up there on the stage myself. And darlingest, I could never have been as silly as that girl, could I? Nor as conceited! And to have people laugh at you—oh!

Then that last act—the terrible vulgarity of that last act, with the poor heroine married to such a commonplace creature, without a shred of distinction, and showing them in such a domestic scene, so terribly intimate and private, without a shade of romance or intellectuality or anything! It makes me blush to think of it!

Oh, it's a black, wicked world, Dorrie dear, and I'm glad I live in the country away from it all—glad, glad, I tell you!

By the way, precious, I was so excited when we met that person at the door coming out, and he *would* speak to me in spite of myself. I can't for the life of me remember what I said to him. I've

tried and tried, but I can't remember! Was it very horribly rude, Dorrie mine?

Please write at once, won't you, and comfort your heartbroken

MARCELLA.

From Stanley Trevan to Thornton Elder.

OLD THORN:

Just a line to tell you I'm leaving town for a few days.

Met the little Grace girl coming from the play the other night. Proud? Well, take it from me, she has one Lucifer skinned a mile! I felt as mean as if I'd been caught stealing candy from a blind orphan.

"Surely, Miss Grace," I said, feeling confoundedly like a fool, "you know this was all good-natured? A playwright has to color things up a bit here and there, or they don't get over the footlights."

And this is what she handed me, staring straight through me with eyes that looked like violets in the rain: "I can only remind you, Mr. Trevan, of a speech of your own when I first met you. You told me that you were afraid I was casting my pearls before swine. Well, I think you were right!"

Do you get that, Mr. Stage Manager Elder? Comment is superfluous. And such is the price of success!

Yours, in confusion,

THE MAN WHO DARED TO WRITE
ABOUT THE WOMAN WHO ASPIRED.



"DO you believe in a personal devil?"

"Yes, indeed. A friend of mine married a perfect devil through answering a personal."



WE will all admit that we *were* fools, but not that we *are*.

HIS FATHER'S HEIR

By Fred B. Linton

JAMES WELCH, Jr., looked out through the bars of the paying teller's window at the long line of excited men and women in the lobby of the First National. For half an hour he had handed out cash as fast as he could count it, yet the line seemed no shorter than when he began. Each man who reached the window feverishly drew the entire amount of his deposit, and then passed out with an expression of relief.

The president of the bank, large and portly, with bulging eyes, came out of his office and remonstrated with the anxious men in the line. He assured them the bank was solvent.

"Where's Mr. Welch, the cashier?" cried a small, nervous man near the door.

"Yes, what does *he* say?" asked a prosperous-looking business man, third from the coveted window, looking hard at the closed door of the cashier's private office.

"Shut up!" cried the seventh in the line, shoving forward. "Get your cash quick. Give us a chance."

The president precipitously retreated to the paying teller's cage, snapping the steel-barred door behind him. His bulging eyes protruded still farther when he saw the dwindling pile of notes in the cash drawers.

"Can your father help us any?" he asked in a whisper.

James Welch, Jr., shook his head. "There is a run on every bank in town."

"Fools!" exclaimed the president under his breath. "Why can't they be calm? The panic will pass in a day."

"There will be a fearful howl when we have to close the bank"; and James measured with a steady eye his rapidly

decreasing cash and the lengthening line of panic-stricken people.

The vice president, a tall, thin man with side whiskers, came in hurriedly from the street. He pleaded with the mob to disperse, asserting that he would pledge his fortune to guarantee the soundness of the bank.

"To hell with your guarantee!" cried a man near the door. "I want my money now." A woman in the line wept hysterically, and there was a general rush for the paying teller's window.

"Get out, or I'll knock you down!" cried a burly grocer, shoving aside a man who pushed in front of him.

A sudden hush fell upon the room. A tall, slightly stooped man, with heavy white eyebrows and a kindly countenance, made his way slowly through the crowd at the door. He walked to the center of the lobby, rested his arm on a writing desk which circled a pillar and calmly surveyed the frightened crowd.

A wave of relief swept over young Welch as his father entered, and he said "Amen" when he heard the president mutter, "Thank God!"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen! A run on the First National!" Mr. Welch, the cashier, raised his hand high above his head, as though he would as soon expect the heavens to fall. His kindly eye went from face to face. Every man in the room looked ashamed at having been caught there. "I assure you, my friends," he said very quietly, "the bank is sound. I give you my word of honor."

For half a minute there was an intense, painful silence.

"If Mr. Welch says this bank is all right, it is all right," cried the pugilistic

grocer, who was now second from the window. "I'm going home."

The cashier walked to the rear of the bank, took a bunch of keys from his pocket, deliberately unlocked the door of his private office and entered.

Five minutes later there were only four men in the lobby of the bank. These were lined up before the receiving teller's window making deposits. All that day James Welch, Jr., with little to do, watched the receiving teller busy with a constant line of depositors. At closing time much of the money drawn from the various banks in Fairchance on that wild, black day of the panic was safely stored and locked in the solid vaults of the First National, or had passed through the First National, being promptly sent, in exchange for approved securities, to the aid of other banks.

That evening as young Welch, weary from the day's excitement and storm rode home in a crowded car, his jaded attention was attracted by hearing his father's name. He then noticed for the first time that the vice president of the bank sat just in front of him, talking to a prominent manufacturer of Fairchance. He heard the vice president relate how his father had checked the run on the bank. Above the jangle of the car, the clatter of passing vehicles and confused, excited voices, James heard him say:

"The confidence that man inspires in the public is remarkable."

"We all swear by him," asserted the manufacturer, a short, fat man with an optimistic smile.

"He is a most valuable asset to the bank," said the vice president, stroking his side whiskers.

"He is the bank, I should say," said the manufacturer with a chuckle. "The people trust the man—not the institution."

"Mr. Welch is a born banker," said the vice president. "He attends to all the affairs of the First National. The officers and the directors leave everything in his hands. He makes the loans, superintends the employees and originates our systems. His father, you know, was once cashier of the bank, and

a man very much like our Mr. Welch; everyone trusted him."

"Yes, I remember him. A fine man!"

"He took the present Mr. Welch into the bank and taught him the business from A to Z. When he died, Mr. Welch was put in his place. It is now the ambition of Mr. Welch's life to have his son James succeed him. But there is something peculiar—I might almost say mysterious—about Mr. Welch."

"You mean his extraordinary power of inspiring confidence?"

"I refer to his habit of hoarding money—if he does hoard it. No one knows. He is extremely economical in his expenditures—in fact, miserly. Although for a number of years he has received a good salary for a city of this size, he owns no stock in our bank, no real estate and apparently nothing else. What he does with his money is a mystery."

"I cannot believe Mr. Welch a miser. He is too sympathetic, too kind-hearted."

"No, but—well, it's too much for me. Here is my corner. I hope by tomorrow the crisis of the panic will be past." The vice president pushed the bell button and shoved his way through the crowd to the door.

James Welch, Jr., sat for the remainder of the trip motionless, hearing nothing of the excited voices and the confusion about him. Then other people, too, wondered what his father did with his money. James had never been troubled by the fact that his allowance when a boy had been barely sufficient to cover necessities, or that his father had denied him a college education and forced him at an early age to enter the bank. But in later years, as he became aware that the public noted his father's petty economies and apparent miserliness, his mortification had been keen. He knew that his father cared little for money, that he was affectionate and generous by nature. Why he hoarded money, if he did hoard it, James could never understand.

That the word of a Welch in a business transaction was better than a bond was a proverb in Fairchance. In common

with his father, James had an intense pride in the reputation of the family. If Mr. Welch shared the mortification of his only son at the one dull spot made conspicuous by its untarnished setting, he gave no sign of it, and the subject of his expenditures was the only one on which James could never approach him.

One morning, two weeks later, James stood in his cage before his barred window, arranging his cash on the polished glass counter in preparation for the day's work. His blue eyes and frank, open countenance lit up with a pleasing smile as his father entered.

He noted with pleasure the good will, the respect bordering on reverence, with which the employees of the bank greeted the cashier as he walked to his private office. He felt the stir of activity, the thrill of aroused energy, the inspiration of the concerted, harmonious movement which flowed into every department of the First National the instant his father arrived.

A few minutes later he was summoned to the cashier's private office.

"James, my boy," said Mr. Welch, motioning him to a massive leather-cushioned chair beside his desk, "I have splendid news for you."

James took the proffered chair and looked inquiringly at his father.

"You are to be promoted to the position of assistant cashier on the first of next month. Isn't that splendid?" Mr. Welch's kindly eyes beamed affectionately upon his son.

"I am sorry, father, but I cannot accept."

"Cannot accept? Why, bless my heart! What is the matter, boy?"

"I am going to quit the bank." James spoke quietly but firmly.

"What put that notion into your head?" Mr. Welch asked with something like asperity, a troubled look coming into his eyes.

"I have intended for some time to speak to you about my desire. Bank work is all routine and caution. I love action. I want to do some real work."

"Banking is the greatest business in the world," cried Mr. Welch. "I want

you to take my place, as I took my father's."

"No. I shall leave the bank."

"You must not!"

"I came into the bank when I was a boy, against my wishes, to please you," replied James, looking steadily at his father. "Now I am a man, and must act in accordance with my own judgment. I hoped you would approve my course."

Mr. Welch's face grew stern. "James, you shall not go."

"Shall not?"

Mr. Welch rose and walked slowly about the office, his footsteps making no sound on the soft, rich-hued carpet. There was a strange look in his eyes. Suddenly he stopped before James and said very quietly: "Shall not, my boy."

"Boy?" he cried. "I am twenty-five. Why shouldn't I go? Do you think to hold me by your ill-hoarded wealth? I want no inheritance."

Mr. Welch's face was white and still. "James," he said, with a quietness that was intense, "I have not a cent in the world. I owe this bank one hundred thousand dollars. I carry it in securities which I have forged!"

"You—a forger!" James staggered back from his father. The very foundations of the earth seemed slipping from under him.

"Yes; but listen."

James threw up his arm as though to ward off a blow. "Go on," he said hoarsely.

Mr. Welch struggled for self-control and then went on in a voice vibrant with quiet intensity.

"Years ago your grandfather, in a weak moment, stole a large sum from the bank for speculation. He forged securities to cover the amount. He lost everything. This was the only dishonest act of his life. His remorse was bitter. He determined to pay back the money with interest. He confessed to me. I was then assistant cashier. He pledged me to help him. Remorse and fear of discovery bore on him heavily. Soon after he died. I was made cashier. I took up the debt. From time to time I replaced the forged securities with

other forged ones. The principal I could never pay. I have paid the interest. The bank has never lost a cent of income on the stolen money, and shall never lose. It takes two-thirds of my salary. That is a trifle. But how I have writhed under the stigma of miser! How the fear of discovery haunts me! God! I would give my life to spare you!"

A wave of feeling swept over James. He seized his father's hand and crushed it in his strong clasp. The shock of the revelation at first stunned him. Now he realized that his father was indeed the soul of honor he had always supposed him to be. Even his apparent miserliness had been but a noble sacrifice for the family honor. All the loyalty and affection of his nature went out to him. "I will stay with you," he said. "I will help."

James threw his whole energy into his new work. Every day he mastered some new feature of his father's duties in addition to his own. He soon learned the system by which the shortage was concealed, and relieved his father of that part of the work.

"I like banking better now," James said one day as they left the bank; and he cheerfully hushed his protesting conscience when he saw the comfort his father derived from his words.

As they passed along the street, James perceived with increasing pride the respect and affection with which his father was greeted by the men they met.

"Let us tell the directors and ask them to wipe out the shortage," said James. "They can better afford to do so than to have confidence shaken in the bank by exposure."

"No, no!" Mr. Welch protested vehemently. "The directors must never know. Once our secret becomes known to another person, we could no longer guard it. Our name would go down in ignominy and dishonor."

"You are right. They must never know. Grandfather's name shall never be dishonored by any word of yours or mine."

Mr. Welch's eyes glistened with pride.

"I will find a better way," said James

resolutely. "The shortage must be paid."

The next morning when he rose he said positively to himself, "The shortage must be paid." The clatter of the car on the way downtown sang, "Be paid—be paid—be paid!"

He laid aside from his salary every dollar above his necessary expenses. As his father paid all the interest, James's contribution was applied to the principal. It was a simple matter of arithmetic to calculate that, at the present rate, they could pay the shortage in about one hundred years!

Summer passed and autumn came. Still the ever present problem clung to James's mind unsolved. As soon as one scheme was set aside as impracticable, he went to work on another.

One day in October he went into the cashier's private office and found his father sitting in his chair, pale as death, trembling violently. James ran to his side. "What is it, father?"

The cashier pointed with a shaking finger to the directors' room, which was across the lobby directly opposite his door. "A special meeting," he said hoarsely. "The first time they ever had one without letting me know. Oh, what can it mean?"

James gasped, then recovered himself quickly. "It is nothing, I dare say," he said soothingly, laying his hand on his father's arm. "Don't be alarmed."

A clerk entered at that moment, bringing from the directors a summons for Mr. Welch. He looked helplessly at his son, then brought his lips together, rose quickly, and with an air of resignation followed the clerk.

James alternately paced the floor and sat drumming his fingers on the desk. All the while, through the half-opened door, he keenly watched the entrance to the directors' room. Why this unusual and hurried meeting? Why this secrecy? Why this sudden call for his father? The blood ran cold about his heart.

His watchful eye detected a turn of the knob of the door to the directors' room, and an instant later Mr. Welch appeared, his face set and still. He

came in and took up his overcoat and hat. "Let us go at once," he said, pressing his heart and hurrying from the bank.

James joined him on the pavement and called a cab. Mr. Welch directed the driver to take them home.

"Exposure soon is certain, although they suspect nothing yet," he said, when they were seated in the cab. "The directors have arranged to consolidate the First National with three other banks. You know what that means. Experts are to examine all our accounts and securities. Each will be scrutinized, not in the perfunctory manner of the directors, who trust me implicitly, not in the hurried manner of the official bank examiner, who found it easier to take my word than to investigate, but by experts, who will determine the exact worth or worthlessness of every security in the bank."

"We can find a way to evade them," said James, and his square jaw closed firmly.

Mr. Welch shook his head. "The end is near. Yet how they trust me! They asked me to be cashier of the new institution with an increased salary. They said the public would not have confidence in the consolidated bank unless I was there. What will they say when they know the truth?"

James looked at his father's sensitive, pain-lined, despairing face and formed a silent resolution that he would save him from the agony of exposure at any cost.

The next morning James took up his father's work at the bank, occupying his private office. As soon as he cleared up the routine matters requiring immediate attention, he concentrated his mind on the situation that confronted him. He worked intensely, desperately. The immediate danger of exposure acted as a spur.

Prominent business men from all parts of the city came in to inquire after his father's health. It taxed his patience to the utmost to reply to the numerous inquiries in his usual frank and good-natured manner. Before the day was over his answers were very short, for he resented the interruptions. There was

serious business to perform and a short time in which to do it. His visitors attributed his unusual manner to anxiety for his father's health.

The president suggested to him that, for business reasons, it would be well to appear more cheerful, for at the news of his father's illness the stock of the First National had dropped several points. Any fear on the part of the public that his father would not be able to return soon would cause still further declines.

"And if he never returns?" asked James quietly.

"That would be a calamity," replied the president gravely.

Days passed and Mr. Welch did not return to the bank. James perceived that, although his illness was of the mind, the torture was surely wearing away the body. James went about his work with a heavy heart but a grim determination to play the game to the end.

One evening, as James stepped out into the street from the bank, Mr. Childress, one of the directors, a large man with a florid face and a heavy white mustache, a man from whom prosperity radiated in every line of his fashionably cut clothes, laid a detaining hand upon his shoulder.

"I hope your father can soon return to the bank," he said, looking intently into James's face. "Everything is ready for the consolidation of the banks. The experts are waiting for us to give them the word to check up the securities."

"Well?" gasped James, a gripping sensation about his heart.

"Your father's presence is necessary for us to gain the full confidence of the public in the new enterprise. We are delaying until his return."

"Oh, is that all?" James breathed a sigh of relief.

"That means much to us. We expect, by means of the consolidation, to gain control of this financial district. It will be a fortune for me and my associates. If the Lincoln Bank would join the consolidation our gains would be still greater. Old wizard Mason, who controls fifty-one per cent of the stock, absolutely refuses to join us. No reason, either. He would profit as much

as anyone. But he is dead set—can't move him. I'd like to get control of that bank."

The next day, as James sat in his father's private office, a cloud upon his countenance, grimly wondering how much longer he could delay the inevitable crisis, the door opened and old wizard Mason's son Harry entered. With a fatuous smile he sauntered across the room, languidly seated himself in a leather-covered armchair by James's desk and carefully arranged the knees of his neatly pressed trousers. He looked with commiseration at James, and drawled in his best imitation English accent:

"Say, old chap, why beat out your brains at a dry and dusty desk? Why don't you work your old man like I do? Say, now!"

"One reason is, father objects," laughed James. Harry had been his classmate in the high school. In spite of his affected, foppish manner, James liked him and found him highly amusing.

"That's a trifle. I have a little business matter on hand myself. I played rather high last night—and lost. An affair of honor, don't you know. The governor has shut down on my drawing any more from him this month. Beastly nasty about it. Only one thing to do—must sell these."

James's heart jumped. Harry held a certificate for fifty shares of Lincoln National Bank stock.

"The governor gave me this sometime ago. Wanted to get me interested in business, don't you know. Fancy! Me in business! Never thought of the damned thing until today. Say now, old chap, can't you accommodate a friend and buy these shares at two hundred and fifty? The governor told me not to sell them—was deuced emphatic about it, too. But what is a fellow to do? Got to sell them. Need the cash."

The hand James reached for the certificate trembled. Fifty shares! The market price was two hundred and fifty, but it was worth many times that to the directors of the First National, for it would bring them control of the coveted Lincoln Bank.

James had kept well informed of the situation. Mr. Childress and the other directors, when they found old man Mason would not come into the consolidation, had set about buying enough stock in the Lincoln National to control it. So quietly did they work that the stock advanced only a few points above normal. But after securing forty-nine per cent of the stock, they found that the old wizard and his family owned all the remainder, and that not a share of it was for sale. Their plan to get a majority of the stock seemed futile. But here were fifty shares literally thrust upon James—enough to give them control.

"I can find a buyer for you, I think," said James nervously, endeavoring not to appear too eager. "Wait just a moment."

He rose and pushed back his chair, intending to go to Mr. Childress, who would snap up the stock at any price, but suddenly he halted. An idea flashed through his mind with the vividness of lightning, an idea that set his heart beating like a trip hammer. He reached his hand to the desk to steady himself.

"I'll take the stock," he said, with a queer smile. "Indorse the certificate here."

While Mason was signing his name, transferring the ownership of the stock, James drew five hundred dollars on his own and his father's salary—every cent due them from the bank. He gave it to Mason.

"That leaves twelve thousand due you. Come back in twenty minutes. I'll have it for you."

"Thanks, awfully, old chap."

James seized his hat and went to the Second National Bank, situated in the same block as the Lincoln National. By depositing the certificate as security, he succeeded, after arranging the necessary details, in borrowing twelve thousand dollars. Ten minutes later he gave the cash to Harry Mason and the deal was closed.

James realized that the crisis was at hand. He went directly to his father's bedside for advice. Mr. Welch, his heavy eyebrows knitted and whiter than

ever, his kindly face seamed with lines of suffering, rose from his bed. James threw a dressing robe over his shoulders and led him to a chair by the window.

The message James brought was an elixir for the weary soul of the anguish-stricken man. For an hour they talked earnestly. When they parted Mr. Welch walked alone to the door and laughed cheerfully—the first time for months.

When James returned to the bank he learned that the directors were in session. That suited his purpose exactly. He walked across the lobby of the bank into the boardroom. The directors were grouped about a massive table. As he entered they looked up expectantly.

"My father is much improved," he said, advancing confidently toward the head of the table. "He can return to the bank in a very short time."

"That is the best news yet," cried the president, his bulging eyes wreathed in smiles.

"Bully!" exclaimed Mr. Childress.

Exclamations of rejoicing ran all around the table.

"Father has already been considering some business matters," continued James, eagerly scanning the faces about the table. "He thinks it essential to bring the Lincoln National into the consolidation."

"We agree with him," said the president.

"But how?" queried Mr. Childress, stroking his heavy, white mustache.

"Father has devised a scheme by which he can secure fifty shares—pro-

viding you will authorize him to pay enough for it."

"Authorize him!" cried the president. "We'll authorize him to pay up to one hundred thousand dollars!"

James stood rigid, his fists clenched. The lines on his face became tense.

"To be sure!" exclaimed Mr. Childress, jumping to his feet. "Every man here has been cudgeling his brain for a month to get that stock. It will make us a fortune."

"James," shouted the president enthusiastically, "if your father pulls off a deal like that for us we'll vote him a bonus of twenty-five thousand dollars."

A round of applause, led by Mr. Childress, greeted the suggestion.

"Second the motion."

"I'll vote for that."

"Aye!"

"Aye!"

"I'm with you."

"Aye! Aye!"

"Unanimously carried," cried the president, amid renewed applause.

"When your father produces that stock, one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars is his."

That very afternoon, from a source never known to the directors, the stock was produced.

In the evening James remained at the bank long after everyone else had gone. At three in the morning he closed his desk and turned out the light, his eyes shining with joy. His work was finished. The records were in shape for the experts. The shortage had been paid.



PARKER—I suppose you found Europe very picturesque.

BARKER—Very. The moving pictures in Paris beat those in this country a long city block.



SOME men are willing to clean up a fortune by doing dirty work.

THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER

By Berton Braley

WELL, I was out a-walkin' on the barren Western plains,
When I seen a schooner scuddin' on her after anchor chains.
To the Captain then I said:
"What you got inside yer head?
It must be tar an' oakum, fer it certain isn't brains.

"I have seen a purple camel in a corner hardware store;
I have seen a whale performin' on a stick of two-by-four;
I have seen an' I have heard
Things that never has occurred,
But I never seen a schooner sailin' on the land before.

"So I asks you, kind an' pleasant, an' I hopes you'll answer me,
Why you sails acrost the hummocks, which is rough as they can be.
Seems to me yer course is quaint,
An' some hard upon yer paint;
An' besides, a sailin' vessel oughter sail upon the sea."

The Captain of the schooner takes another chew of plug,
An' replies to me in accents like the whistle of a tug;
An' I has to stand an' hear
While he tells my whole career
In a manner most offensive like a tough an' ugly thug.

But at last he gives his reasons, which is simple an' complete.
Says he: "I sails my schooner o'er the fields of wavin' wheat,
An' I keeps her right on land
For because, you understand,
If she happens for to founder I won't have to wet me feet.

"For, oh, I does abominate the water when it's wet,
An' the last time I was shipwrecked I won't never more forget,
For because the waves they rolled
An' I ketched an awful cold,
An' I quit the briny ocean an' I'm quittin' of it yet."

Then he hoists his scupper capstan an' he reefs the after rail,
An' he starts the log to rollin' an' the schooner hits the trail;
An' I waves my hat to him
Till his portly form is dim,
An' above the far horizon comes the moon arisin' pale.

THE GEISHA

By Adachi Kinnosuke

BRUCE was one emphatic perspiring purple. He was waiting—compelled to wait. It was trying on his American patience—on the Seattle brand of patience.

And he was waiting for the Geisha, which made the martyrdom not a whit less trying.

Of course the place was very pretty and suitable for the cultivation of the above mentioned virtue—a gem of a cottage, as leisurely as the day was long, a piping paradise of peace perched up there on the swelling bosom of Suwa Hill lordling the city and bay of Kobe.

He clapped his hands after the manner of the natives. The *shoji* opened in answer to his summons.

"*Hai danna*—august behests?"

It was the *o-taiko*—the honorable drum and *samisen* carrier for the Geisha—patting the ivory mat with his forehead in prostration.

A charming person the *o-taiko*—with his matchless debonair airs, which are the happy hybrid between the high virtue of humility and the unspoken airs of superiority of an alchemist who coins human frailty.

"See here, old pal," said the gentleman from Seattle, "this post-grad of yours in patience is a howling success. A bigger hit than your august school of scandal, I should say. But, heavens alive, man, when are you going to put her across? Yes, yes, view's great here. You're right; scenery's the only thing that interests me."

"Yes, honorable master," made answer the *o-taiko* out of sheer good nature and the desire of agreeing with whatever he meant by his modern Sanscrit, "the Geisha will be here in precisely one-

tenth part of a wee moment." Which told Bruce that the *o-taiko* could be witty at a pinch even at the expense of so fine a patron as Bruce.

And in about ten rubberneck eternities the Geisha came.

She stepped into the room, stood motionless a second, threw back a look over her shoulder and made sure that the *o-taiko* had fled, then turned round and faced Bruce with a smile.

He did not greet the girl with a smile. His eyebrows went up and his steady eyes sharpened in a darkening frown, like a man who has stumbled on a soul gripping tragedy in a farce.

The harsh light from the electric lamp—for nowadays the prose of up-to-date civilization glares everywhere, even through the haunts of geishas—fell upon the reddish brown mass of her hair. Reddish brown? Wait a minute, for that was not all. Her face was oval; complexion like a white lotus flower blooming through a veil of sun tan (the like of which you can find sometimes among the Spanish-American beauties of southern California) all of which was lighted by a pair of eyes which shifted from dark gray to velvety brown under deep shading lashes. She rose slender and straight, full five feet seven; and a bare suspicion of French heels is ridiculous on Japanese padded mats. The long silken sleeves fell from her sloping shoulders with a grace which sent Bruce dreaming of the aviators of Kingdom Come.

Bruce did not speak.

The Geisha gravitated toward him with a curtsy like the swelling of a wave:

"Many honor. Me unworthy so much, but honorable call with you."

"Oh, come off the perch," said Bruce. "I am easy money; that's right. Didn't know I looked it so plain, though. A Jap girl with golden hair, eh?"

"Look—see," made answer the Geisha, as unperturbed as a stone Buddha on a country road. "You 'Meriken man, sabe?"

"Right," declared Bruce laconically; "I'm a Yankee—from Missouri, though."

"A dead swell," said the smiling oracle before him.

"The real thing, the grandest ever;" and with the tone of a martyr squaring with his conscience at any price, he hedged: "A bargain counter leftover, entirely at Your Ladyship's service."

"Yes, honorable lord, me sabe," said she sweetly.

"Oh, you do! Bully!"

The feast was served. The classic aroma of the pale golden *sake* toned the twilight peace of the Suwa Hill stealing into the room through the open *shoji*. The Geisha lifted up a *sake* bottle, and coming closer to Bruce offered him a cup—not much bigger than his pipebowl—and filled it for him. A feather of steam rose from the cup as in an Ukiyoe print; for the *sake* is always served heated.

"Hot stuff," said Bruce, nodding to the steam, "and flat as a Sunday comic supplement."

"Ah!" said the Geisha. "W'isky me have got. A' same Scotch me bring?" added she brightly.

"Never mind. Don't you bother your pretty head about that. The fancy stunt before us is to rush the seaweeds and those pink slices of raw fish at double quick. After that we can get right down to brass tacks and—talk business."

"Business?"

"Sure," said Bruce in a voice which carried all the assurance in the world. "And no milksop Sunday school rehash, either, believe me."

"Me no sabe," said the provoking smile which was irresistible.

Bruce laughed outright. "You don't understand. All right, let me tell you in plain United States that I am going to have you."

"Marry me? 'Meriken consul marry me and you?" Her *naïveté* was simply a dream.

Bruce surrendered promptly and laughed again.

"Job's ghost!" said he. "What's the use of kidding me like that? What in thunder has the American consul got to do with it? You want something better than our consul's stationery, anyway, don't you? You want your certificate on legal tender—"

"More *sake*? Speck more *sake*?" said she, interrupting him. And her petal-like fingers lifted up the bottle. Her rounded arm gleamed from the wide opening of the Japanese sleeve like the throat of a lily. Bruce looked from the arm to her slightly bending profile, and a strange light sprang into his eyes. A mist came over them, too.

A voice—by no means a wee shy whimper, by the bye—yelled deep down inside of his fancy white vest: "Danger! Wake up, you chump, and have both your eyes skinned for that cherry-blossom-tinted brainstorm! Worse than mixing drinks; twenty-three's your number. And it takes some speed merchant to pile cool air between you and D. Cupid, Esq. Hustle, you old pin-headed turtle, you!"

The Geisha clapped her hands and called for the *samisen*.

"Music—a few music?" from the arching eyebrows, and a smile that would get a decision over Captain Macklin's shots every time.

"Whatever you say goes," said Bruce in a fit of absent-mindedness—thinking deeply of an entirely different matter. The Geisha took up her ivory spectrum and sang to the *samisen* accompaniment.

Plaintive, tender and dreamy the tune; but the voice!

"Gee!" thought Bruce, getting more and more absent-minded. "Gee! There's a bigger fortune in her voice than any hole in the Klondike!" And for almost half an hour he clean forgot getting down to "brass tacks" and—talking business. He was too busy eaves-dropping at the portals of heaven.

"Great! Go on," said Bruce, when the girl stopped.

But the Geisha only smiled. "*Sake?*" she asked, taking up the bottle.

"*Sake* be—" Bruce began piously.

"The moon! Look—see!" And without waiting for response from Bruce, she led the way out upon the veranda.

The moon was veiled; far down at their feet both the city and the sea were smothered in the magic of silver and gray through which lights came and went like the souls fireflying the shadow world. Bruce stood close to the Geisha. Her willowlike person exhaled a delicate perfume that went to his head like young wine. It was utterly absurd for a mere man to stand against such a formidable conspiracy of heaven and earth and woman. Never had his heart pounded his ribs so when he had faced the old sweetheart of his youth for the first dance of his life. What was he doing? How could he tell? But she knew! A second later she felt his tremulous breath upon her bare neck. She sprang aside and faced him with blazing eyes:

"Don't you dare!" said she in immaculate English.

"Oh, I see," said Bruce, and the same frowning scrutiny of his sharp eyes returned to him.

"I can speak my father's tongue if I wish, certainly," she told him in a steady voice. "He was an American like you."

"I see," said Bruce again.

"And as much of a renegade and scoundrel. God help him!"

"I see," said Bruce for the third time.

"You—Christian—*gentlemen*," said she in a low, even voice, with a slow soul-quaking, heart-charged emphasis on almost every syllable, "you come from 'God's country'—I believe that's what you call it. Yes, there's a deal in a name, it seems—judging from the specimens we see among the froth and flotsam on these shores."

She stopped a moment; evidently she wished to control her voice better. The bitterness of her soul, she saw, was coloring her words more than she wished. Bruce said nothing; only his gaze was keener and steadier than ever. She went on:

"The moment you gentlemen pass through Suez or through the Golden Gate you become possessed with the passionate mission of quaffing deep to the vile dregs the cup of Oriental vice. You read '*Madame Chrysanthème*' and other books that misrepresent us in the same way you read the Holy Book. And then you come to us as you are here to-night—"

Right there something happened. Just at that precise dramatic moment, when the grave words of the wondrous Geisha were mounting with the awesome calm of doom to a peroration—just then Bruce did something. It was nothing sensational; he neither shouted nor squealed as a sinner certainly should—nor yet prayed. He didn't say a word. All he did was to slip his fingers into one of the pockets of the white vest and take out a small article, round in shape, about two inches in diameter. It was a metal mirror, such as women in certain sections of Nippon used to carry in their girdles some years back—an old-fashioned thing which wouldn't bring two coppers in a curio shop nowadays. On its back were a few Japanese letters worked in with the conventional stork, pine and bamboo designs—evidently the names of the original owner of the mirror. It was that which Bruce held out to the denouncing angel—just for a brief second. And then, as if he were afraid of losing it, he put it back into his vest pocket.

"Go on," said he to her. And if within him his soul squirmed and whimpered under the tongue lashings, neither his eyes nor his voice played traitor. He looked about the calmest man before the flaming sword of judgment one could well imagine. "Go on," he repeated, calm as though he were a capitalist in cool cucumbers.

The girl *did* go on.

Then verily every line of his superior countenance did move—and how it moved! Bruce must have had the faith of Shinran in the magic efficacy of that old mirror. His firm lips actually dropped apart for a second. Ah, no! He was no callous villain, after all. The Geisha denounced him and his like

for the vulgar and insolent insult against the womanhood of Nippon, as if, for all the world, she were a reincarnation of Isaiah in the most bewitching of feminine charms. For some reason, evidently absolutely convincing to himself, Bruce flashed the mirror. The girl failed to see a trump; and Bruce was minus a trick which he had counted on practically as good as his. And the girl sailed right in, her sleeves rolled up after the admirable fashion of a German surgeon, into the core of this imported moral cancer. It was fast and furious and merry. All that the able-bodied seasoned old stager could do was to steal a gasp or two at irregular intervals like a confessed piker on God's atmosphere.

Suddenly a wise smile replaced a blank wonder in Bruce's face. And once more his fingers stole into his vest pocket; once more the hand mirror was thrust before the eyes of the Geisha. This time Bruce held it out longer and made sure that she saw everything that was on the back of the small metal disc. The preachment went on as if nothing hedged it—to the eternal puzzlement of Bruce—to the bitter end.

"Are you done?" demanded Bruce, who had not heard more than a few fragmentary remarks, here and there, because his mind was on a way-off excursion most of the time the preachment was on—the sinner! "Are you done? Because if you are, dear lady, I have something to say to you. But before I put down my card just take a good long look at this little curio—more particularly the back of it. A rather classy piece of work, wouldn't you say?"

"I know the mirror—well," said the Geisha, and her face told about as much tale of her inner emotion as a counterfeit dollar bill of the gold deposit in the Treasury. "Yes, it was mine—my mother's."

"Which," added Bruce, looking straight and steadily into her eyes and in the tone of voice of one who was right upon the dramatic climax of no small intensity, "which was stolen from you some years ago."

The stoic composure of her face had spoken well of the blood of her Japanese

mother—up to this point. But this brief remark of Bruce played an easily visible havoc with her suave non-tell-tale features. "I've trumped her!" thought Bruce, happy as a boy who had got away with a stolen apple. When she recovered herself in a measure she said slowly:

"No—not stolen."

"Oh, given?"

"N-no, oh, no!"

"I thought not. The story didn't jibe, if it were."

The head of the Geisha dropped a little—her proud, even haughty, defiant air seemed to wither like a flower. Bruce said nothing. He watched her and seemed to enjoy it. There was a silence which seemed very long to both of them for their imaginations were making a long tour into a far, far past. It was Bruce who broke the silence:

"You are a geisha—a public entertainer by profession," said Bruce in a sort of an academic tone of voice as if he were discussing the rights of the neutrals. "And I have asked you to come here to give me an artistic treat tonight. But if you'd allow me, I can spin a little yarn on my own account. You'll be interested in it—yes, I rather think so."

"Go on," said she.

"It was one of those creepy, long drawn-out distress signals which the Alaskan dogs set up when they think they are hitting about the last relay that took us out a little of our way. We were no Red Cross expedition and we were not hunting for trouble but we did go. When we were on the scene we saw very little—nothing but snow and death. The dogs were all dead except two; and it took some exploration work to dig up even the corpse of one man. There was another man in the party, the pal of the corpse. He was pretty nearly gone, but there was enough life in him to spoil our short cut to fortune—at least that trip. We thought, my pal and myself, that he would make a successful candidate for a nice little hole in the snow, as the other more accommodating fellow did—in a day or two at the outside. So we

lugged him along; he was a nice looking thing for a traveling companion, he was. He did not go as quickly as we thought he would and for a while he did threaten to turn out to be a terrible joke of an entertaining traveling companion at the expense of our precious grub. He treated us to the details of his fearful adventure. You see, the poor devils had lost their way in a windstorm in that white puzzle lane. They walked in a circle, it seemed, from what the chap said.

"Have you ever been lost in a snowstorm? No? Well, if you had, you'd know that you can't do much. About as little as you are doing in this nice little reform work of yours—reforming the Yankee sinners and scalwags on going-away sprees on heathen shores. It kills them—I mean the snowstorm—just as sure as your reform work does. It does mighty little reforming work, believe me. Just as it was in this chap's case."

Her lips, which were palpitating temptations in ruby, set between a pair of dimples, curled. And into her eyes came a light even brighter than the passionate fever with which she had denounced Bruce a moment ago. But the light was not good to look upon. Then she laughed a low little laugh. It was downright wicked, that laugh, and husky. Bruce stopped in the course of his story and listened to it as if he were particularly interested in that sinister laugh of the Geisha. And forsooth it was enough to make her laugh! Here was a great giant with the air of the all-wise talking of her reform work! Great heavens! It was revenge her soul thirsted for, not reform. Vengeance for the unutterable hell she had suffered since her childhood days when all other children called her an evil name and ran away from her as from a plague. Revenge for yet a worse hell her mother had suffered, for those bitter days and sleepless nights, and years and years of them, her mother had spent after her American lover had betrayed and deserted her! Reform! Ye eight million gods; it was to laugh! She was staring at Bruce. She did not see him. She saw only the

pitiable sight of her mother taking to a side street of Kobe when gossiping cats and desiccated hens passed her whispering, "*rasha-men*"—the opprobrium which even the women of the street would resent as a deadly insult.

Bruce watched her closely; he went ahead with his story, however, as if he had seen nothing:

"Well, when the poor devil saw that all was up with him he dug up this little toilet article and told me a mighty interesting story. I suppose we needn't waste time over it here—the same sort of deal you've tried to put across with me tonight, I guess; and the rest—you know better than I do, anyway.

"You were deadly off in one thing. You must have thought he was fooling with you. You were wrong. He was in earnest, madly, damnably, hopelessly in love with you. He told me how many times he had proposed to you and how you had thrown him down, squashed him and hashed him. Your reform dose must have gone to his head—that's the way I figured it out.

"Well, he gave me this little thing—you ought to have seen him handling it. He couldn't have treated it better if it were a gift from the Almighty. He was positively silly and dippy over it; and Lord, what a time he did have in parting with it! I told him to keep it; surely no mortal cared for it half as much as he seemed to. But he would have none of it. He wanted me to see it safely through till it landed in your hand. It was his last and only wish, he told me. One has to humor a dying man; so I said all right, and here I am. And I tell you I am glad that the blamed thing is at the end of its journey."

He held it out to her, at the same time staring at her in a queer way which seemed to say, "Hands off!" He waited a few moments. The witted head of the Geisha did not rise. And this simple fact, in some mysterious manner, seemed to give him a sort of satisfaction. A grim smile played on his tightly closed lips. "Will you take it now?" said he.

The Geisha threw up a sharp, quick glance at him, suddenly waking out of a

fit of absent-mindedness. And she held out her hand.

Bruce, however, did not give her the tiny mirror. Instead, he kept on looking at the slender, delicate fingers of the Geisha. He saw them tremble and shake more and more. Her eyes had dropped, but seeing that he was handing her the mirror, she looked at him again. This time her eyes were swimming in tears and flooding.

The sight brightened the face of Bruce with a rush of a sudden light. He seemed to have caught something for which he had been watching all evening—the signal.

He said, still holding back the mirror: "There is just one more thing; I've got to tell you about this thing before I give it back to you. It is this: the poor devil—well, the fellow did *not* die."

There was a sound like a murdered sob somewhere amid the silken folds of the Geisha's long sleeves in which she had hid her face; it sounded also a little like "Oh!" exploding deep down in her heaving bosom.

After what seemed to Bruce—you see, he is an American, and from growing Seattle—ample time for a couple of aboveboard reincarnations, he repeated his "Will you take it?" in a tone of voice so scandalously gentle that nobody could have taken it from him without a protest.

"Where—where is he?" was the only answer.

And from the tone of her tremulous voice the gods must have wondered whether it was, after all, bloody vengeance for which the heart of the Geisha hungered and thirsted.

"Where is he?" Bruce repeated the query after her. "Oh, I should say about half a mile down the hill—that is, if he hasn't walked off the floor of his room at the Kobe Hotel. I suppose he has been chewing up his heart and cursing me for all he is worth for some time now. I guess I'd better not keep him waiting much longer. Will you relieve me of this thing?"

"Y-yes," said she without looking up, but reaching out her hand again.

"Or shall I?" suggested Bruce, still holding on to the precious mirror. "Or would you rather let the hand that stole it restore it to its rightful owner?"

"No!" she suddenly blazed at him, tossing her head high in defiance. "He did not steal it—never. I dropped it purposely—right in front of him. It was meant for him—and—and he knew it."

"Oh, all right. Then it's proper for him to keep it and—and come to thank you for a nice gift. Isn't it?"

Her head drooped again.

"Shall I tell him that?"

"Y-yes, please."



FAN STRATEGY

By Homer Mooney

BEHIND its bars Milady rests,
Secure from all advances;
And it might well a fortress be—
A fence, or shield of coquetry—
As over it, with merry jests,
She sends the most alluring glances;
Until the disillusioned man,
'Mid taunts of mock derision,
Discovers it is not a fan,
And he is in a prison.

THE CANDLE OF UNDERSTANDING

By Inez G. Thompson

EARLY in her ordeal Rhoda Hed-dington found that she must allow herself something to hate, a purely feminine need that surprised her as an unsuspected flaw in her make-up. She had thought herself a woman capable of being so possessed by a purpose—a single love—as to be rendered immune to the minor incidents of existence; but the attrition of an unaccustomed mode of life laid bare a single sensitive spot that she called "nerves," and humored. When she found a physical correspondence in her shrinking from the long flight and fall of the elevators, those swift, smooth sliding pistons of the huge building that sucked her kind in endlessly from the reservoir of the streets by day, and drained them, depleted, back again, she was glad of an aversion that offered so safe an outlet for her weakness, and deliberately warped her perspective of happenings to make all other irritations subordinate to this.

For seven years and eight months the curious safety valve sufficed. For seven years and eight months she caught her breath with a sibilant, sickened intaking at the beginning of that rise and descent of a dozen floors; but it was characteristic of the woman that she neither made nor looked small exultation when the detested door slid shut behind her for what she knew to be the last time. Five of her associates—proofreaders for Lovett & Co., publishers—went down with her on this Saturday afternoon; but they had no inkling that their perfunctory good-bye to her was final. As she turned up the street alone, she wished suddenly that she had told them and had parted in more friendly fashion—a thought so foreign to her habit that it

startled her; and when she caught herself straining to follow the newsboys' cries, expecting to hear her own great news in their mouthings, she admitted finally that her "nerves" had developed almost out of hand. In eight years she had faced no such admission.

She deliberately slackened her pace, looked in shop windows unseeingly, argued down the mental flurry and outwardly was quite composed when she entered the tea room where she was to meet her husband's friend. He—Judson Weld—was visibly excited and embarrassed as he came forward quickly from the corner table he had reserved; and she saw that he was grateful to her for her self-control, even as his second narrowed glance marveled at it. He placed her chair and drew up his own in bungling haste, getting out his card case and time tables.

"Everything is smooth so far," he began rapidly; "the papers gave it an item merely. Now I've taken two rooms at my lodgings for you—here's the address. I gave the name 'Andrews'—it simplified, eh?" He started as a waiter murmured at his elbow. "Oh—er—yes, tea, of course. Tea and—"

"Oolong for me, please," Rhoda came to his assistance; "and toasted muffins with marmalade—and I think a patty." Mr. Weld, recalled to his duty, reached for the menu.

"Here are things in the chafer—anything you fancy—" But she wished nothing more. "The same for me, then," he ordered briefly; but he did not return at once to the subject uppermost in his mind. He made a frowning pretense of looking up trains—and Rhoda restrained a smile. He was so transparent, this

big, good-looking male creature. He was thinking how commendable his own enthusiasm in a friend's cause, and how unfeeling her frank appetite for muffins and tea—and a patty! Yet even as she exulted that she was so far removed from the petty desire for approbation that she felt no impulse to give this man a hint of her true feeling, she found herself leaning across to him, seized by a madness for speech almost beyond control and beyond understanding, the torrent of truth swelling her throat and numbing her tongue. Next instant she had set her teeth against the words, fought them back; but the cup she tried to put down casually clattered against its saucer in the slow release of her shaking fingers. When she looked up Weld's eyes were on her, alight with ingenuous relief and sympathy, his heavy face glowing.

"Well, if you aren't the pluckiest—" he burst out. "I might have known! But you looked so—so *calm*, somehow, I couldn't believe you were caring so; but I might have known!"

"Fool!" she groaned inwardly; then aloud: "Did I? I didn't expect to succeed so well. Rooms for us at your lodgings, you said?" He grew business-like at once.

"I thought it best. It's a quiet house, and I could arrange—you'll be asked no references or—that sort of thing. I've said that my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, were to be in town for a while. There's a sitting room, chamber and bath free for a month, and reasonable enough. If you've anything else in mind, of course—"

"No; nothing. You are very good—you know all that I would say, I hope. And have you thought where—where we three—are to meet?" Weld reddened.

"Why, I wanted to ask you that. Of course I know—I understand—that is, I felt—" He floundered through hampering words. "Well, to be plain, I know you'd rather be—first—to see him; but wouldn't it be better to have you go straight to the place—cab and luggage as if you'd come from the train—and let me—attend to the rest? I hope you know that I don't want to seem to—er—

intrude; but it might be easier—easier for him, too."

Rhoda Heddington looked through him with calm eyes, the while she longed to break the cup in her hand across his good-humored face. It was sensible, of course, his arrangement, but to have him the first to greet Andrew—*her* Andrew—

"Very well," she agreed. "If you will prepare the way for me—tell the woman that I am to come ahead—I'll leave the rest to you. And now"—she opened her wrist bag and got out a small roll of bills—"here is money for things he will need—his sizes and all that." Weld took it awkwardly after a vain protest. "I bought a suitcase," she went on, "and after your note, arranging to meet me here, I checked the case as I came down this morning. You can get it as we leave and take it to him with the new things. As to his changing—those arrangements I must leave to you. Is there anything further?"

"I can't recall—anything." Frowning and puzzled again, Weld took the check. He had come, she knew, to argue with and advise a helpless, possibly hysterical creature, and had found himself receiving instructions and outdone in common sense. There was veritable dislike in his glance as he pushed away his cup in indication that he wished to be gone; and following his thought, she guessed that he was experiencing fresh sympathy for her husband—for very human, all lovable Andrew Heddington, the discovery of whose long continued and cleverly managed thefts had been news of front page, black type importance, because of the amazing total of his speculations.

That, however, which called out the defiant loyalty of Judson Weld was recollection of the mysterious (inevitably) blonde woman, whose existence had been established by the prosecution, but who had vanished as completely as the thousands the misguided man had, presumably, squandered upon her. On that—on all points—nothing was to be had from Andrew Heddington; and for that very reason those who knew him felt that his need—and temptation—

had been beyond the power of words to convey. Fourteen years had been his sentence. "Oh, dear me!" said Wilmot of the *Chronicle*. "We can't have that happening to *Andy*, you know!" And at once, under his capable direction, had begun the quiet movement toward Andrew's pardon. One man, of the mulcted trust company, had stood out against it. So Andrew had served eight years—eight years shut away to keep the books of his prison, which was the utmost leniency even Wilmot could obtain for him. His friends had a great deal to make up to Andrew, they agreed.

"If there's nothing more," Andrew's wife broke in on the hostile musing she so easily fathomed, "I'll be getting on; as it is, I've rather a good deal to see to."

Effectively roused, Mr. Weld, flushed and flurried, inquired whether he might not be of assistance, and was obviously relieved when she said no. Indeed, there was nothing she had not foreseen and prepared for, years back.

She allowed herself the luxury of giving utensils for surreptitious cookery to a shop girl among the lodgers on her floor at Mrs. Lindstrom's dreary establishment. As she had made no friends in the place, there were no evasive leave-takings—a compensation she had kept in mind at such times as she had felt a hungry small stirring of the social instinct. With Mrs. Lindstrom, who had received her week's notice as a personal affront and who asked brazen questions, she indulged in a calculated superiority and daring that went far toward repaying the seven years' debt of espionage in the matter of gas burning after hours, of smuggled food and the laundering of small articles in the bathroom. It was a pitifully triumphant moment when the cab came—a cab for one of Mrs. Lindstrom's lodgers!—and she went down the worn stairs with a hiss of silken underskirt and soft tap of thin soles. Mrs. Lindstrom and her "girl," making pretense of cleaning in the lower hall, stared at the transformation of the quiet "top front"—a transformation that held Mrs. Lindstrom's outraged feelings in check till the departing one had

reached the very door, and limited them to one trenchant sentence.

"Anybody can wear swell clo'es," she declaimed, "that wants to be a hussy—these days!" Whereupon she turned her virtuous broad back. But the girl, a half-witless slattern, sat back on her knees, grimy cloth dangling from her hands, and stared with hungry eyes at the one departing in the odor and evidence of ungodliness. On an impulse she did not combat, Rhoda Heddington turned back to her and put a half-dollar in the wet, red hand.

"Good-bye; you've been very nice to me always, Milly," she said. Milly struggled up in a spasm of nods and grins.

"Goo'-bye—thanky, miss—goo'-bye. I—I hope you have good luck." Mrs. Lindstrom yapped her back when she would have followed to the door, bobbing; but pitiful as the tribute was, Rhoda Heddington found herself glad that someone had wished her well, and she wondered whether the shop girl on her floor might not have liked her, had she encouraged it. Plainly she did have "nerves," she decided, putting Lindstrom's behind her mentally with a shrug.

She drew a long breath as the cab swung from cobblestones to asphalt and rolled past blocks that bespoke respectability in polished doorfronts, neat railed areas, evenly adjusted shades at glittering, clean, lace-hung windows that, unoccupied, gave the effect of calmly ignoring the street. After the Lindstrom quarter, it was like going from a bargain counter babel to Sunday tea with nice old ladies.

A neat maid opened the door at the address Weld had given, ushered her to a small reception room and saw to the getting of the trunk upstairs. Rhoda remained standing, her back to the door of the room, idly looking at a picture while unbuttoning her gloves. Inwardly she gathered herself to face a woman who would be quick to detect a flaw in her assumption; the abhorred years might have stamped her despite her cleverness. A woman came in.

"Mrs. Andrews?" she inquired; and

as Rhoda turned there came the gracious thawing of the landlady countenance that confessed itself convinced by the correct traveling attire, comfortably right from hat to shoes, and relieved of any possible uncertainty by the correctly managed glance that estimated her in turn. Rhoda felt a tingle of assurance as she followed the astute Mrs. Baxter up to the second floor where respectability had its abiding place in the high-posted sitting room with its faded embossed paper, ponderous chandelier, yellowed etchings, foggy pier-glass, old style embroideries on table covers and cushions and its Roger's plaster group embodying the art tendency in a corner. The sleeping room was fairly modern, the bath new. Respectability voiced itself in Mrs. Baxter's skillfully conveyed injunctions as to moderation in the use of hot water, towels and service; in her casually conveyed information that transients were taken only on recommendation of a "permanent"—as in Mr. Weld's case; in her humbly dignified mention of the view, the quiet, her long tenancy and the coming of a desirable "permanent" to the rooms that day fortnight. Rhoda Hedddington found herself the better for the babble, even as she smiled at it, on the closing of the door. She had a hold on self-respect again.

She unpacked quickly, moved chairs about, took possession of the place capably and effectively and made herself ready in a new and becoming blue negligee attire that, in the Lindstrom code, would have justified ejection. Someone knocked as she was tying the last ribbon, and she found herself stricken motionless, fearful, dumb for an instant before she caught mentally at the commonplaceness of things, the end of need for apprehension. It was the maid with boxes from the florist.

The door shut again, she wondered what she had dreaded. Not Andrew's coming, surely! Yet she found it was that. She concluded that it was a self-fish fear, a dread lest she break down at sight of him, give way in uncontrollable weakness; and Andrew disliked tearful women.

There were carnations from Judson Weld, a huge bunch of violets and a dozen roses from two other of Andrew's friends who had been informed of her whereabouts. The attention pleased her. She had not cared at all for Andrew's friends, and had been at no pains to conceal it. For that—and for other reasons that they did not define—Andrew's friends had not liked her. In her new mood she felt that she could make them like her, and half resolved to do it, as she arranged the flowers. The room grew sweet and bright with them. All was as ready as might be for Andrew's coming.

How would *she*, she wondered, seem to *him*? Would he find her to his liking? She began to know the extent of her excitement as she turned from her watching at the window to study herself anxiously in the cold depths of the mirror. She knew she did not look her thirty years. Her face was girlishly oval and firm, and her small features were not of the fast aging type; her profusion of dark hair would have redeemed a plainer woman; her mouth, a trifle too thin and sharply cut, she had never liked, but her smile, with its revelation of small, perfect teeth, was an entire success. Her gold brown eyes looked out innocently under placid brows. It was curious, she felt, staring, that she showed no change outwardly. Eight years! She felt to brooding over them, wondering at her own passage through them. Perhaps the change had marked itself within—heart, mind, soul—whatever one called the inner self. Certainly the strain must have told; her "nerves" were evidence of that.

When she looked out again Judson Weld was coming up the street with a tall, fair man, her husband, Andrew Hedddington.

After the first shock of recognition she turned and ran—ran breathing in gasps, panic swift, to the far corner of the next room and whipped around to face the door defensively. It was so instinctive, so bewildering, that she said aloud: "Why—why, what is it?" And the effort of speech brought her to normal. She rushed to the window and peered

out. They were close, and Weld was getting out his latchkey. Andrew was at the door—Andrew! Her heart began to shake her with its thudding. She flew to the room door, opened it and left it slightly ajar, then backed to the center table and leaned against it, arms rigid and palms spread flat on the top, making a brace for her quaking body on either side; and so watched the door. She heard them come up.

"In here," said Weld. "I'll be in my room, next floor front, if you want me for anything." He went on. Andrew tapped softly. She said—almost steadily: "Come in."

II

THE excitement of being under the same roof with romance, guilt—whatever the fitting word for the situation—drove Judson Weld from his room within an hour. His was a methodical, conventional soul, under the modern-young-man exterior, and his contact with the colorful existence of Andrew Heddington unsettled him prodigiously. He was haunted by Andrew's face as he had glimpsed it first far down the smoke-filled aisle between the disgorging trains. The chill gloom of the vast shed, fogged with filthy steam and tainted with the reek of metal, had been too like an inferno through which Andrew moved helpless and dead—Andrew, who had been the merriest of them, the most cheerfully inconsequent and irrepressible! And with recognition there had come into his changed, dazed eyes a stealthy watchfulness, a shrinking—an unmanliness, Weld admitted to himself, flushing. At the door to the waiting room he had fallen behind a step, to get himself better in hand; and Andrew had stood motionless before that ornamentally barred barrier. Weld had known suddenly what bars had come to mean to the man!

He got him to the room of the shabby, questionable little hotel near the station, where he had previously registered, gave him a drink—then another, helped him to bathe and clothe himself. Andrew's wife had allowed a generous sum,

Weld admitted grudgingly, and he had spent it all. They went from the place with Andrew rehabilitated in fine linen and well cut clothing, his head better held, something of color in his thin cheeks and his gray eyes coming alive. Inwardly Weld resented that they had to go to the waiting woman—the woman who had none save her legal right to the resurrected one. He could not keep from wondering what she had said, had done, that cool, quiet, clever, white woman. Of course she was ice—wasn't she? *Was* she? Illogically he found her growing mysterious; and he shook himself away from speculation and took himself outside where he might walk with no lodger underneath or alongside to rap protest. He did not resist the impulse that urged him across the street to look up at the second floor windows, though he hadn't the least idea what he expected to gain by it. What he saw, as he faced about, gave him a start. The draperies of the window nearest him were pulled aside, and Andrew Heddington stood, his face close to the pane, looking out. Even at that distance Weld saw the hunger, the dreadful avidity of the man—and recalled the barred door. The woman *was* ice, then; even so soon their greetings—whatever had served—were done with, and Andrew wanted to be out, needed his kind. Weld started across, lifting his hat to attract his friend's attention; and at that instant Andrew's wife came to his side, looked down and saw the signal.

"Oh—thunder!" Weld stopped short. She would think he was interfering, spying. But even as he halted, dismayed, she smiled, nodded and drew Andrew's attention to him. Andrew's hand came up, half beckoning, then halted; the two spoke together, turned back into the room and the draperies shut. With a growl of irritation Weld turned and walked fast—to be stopped within two blocks by an unbelievably familiar whistle. It *was* Andrew—on the steps, tugging at his coat. Instantly Weld was back to him.

"Why, what's this? Dinner so soon?"

"No—no; Rhoda urged me out—she has several things to do—and to dress."

Andrew came down, shamelessly eager, his eyes still hungry and happily expectant. "I thought—a-bit of a walk, if you felt like it—"

"Fine!" Weld grasped the elbow that came handily above his own as in the old days, swallowing his surprise. "Anywhere in particular?" Andrew faced to the city's heart.

"Not—in particular," he answered breathlessly; "only—to—see things generally." But to Weld, the open and pitiful eagerness meant more. He felt his throat tighten at what he dared next with lowered voice.

"If there's anyone—anyone at all, Andy—that you'd like to look up, you may rely upon me absolutely. I think I—understand, y' know." He saw a curious ripple pass over Andrew's face.

"Thanks," he said. "Perhaps you wouldn't mind going past the—past the bank." Weld had a twinge of hurt at the evasion, but sympathy came uppermost instantly.

"Right. And Prentiss and Filson—they said they'd be at the old place for an appetizer about now—an' old Wilmot; not that they expected to see you, but they said they'd wait about a while on the chance." Andrew's stride lengthened.

"What, old Wilmy? An' Filson?" He uttered a ghost of his old chuckle. "Does 'Dolly' Prentiss still get out his handkerchief when he has to shake hands with a stranger? What's become of Corey?" He was walking fast, and Weld's heart swelled within him. Poor old Andy—good old Andy! Eight years! He cursed the blonde woman.

Through the mesh of the curtain Rhoda watched them out of sight, and then turned, very slowly, and spoke as though to someone in the room.

"I'm not enough," she said, her voice flat and metallic. "Do you understand? I'm not enough." She walked to the table and stood, thrusting her hair back with hard pressing fingers, in a mechanical effort to quicken her dulled brain. Her pale cheeks were roughened to red; her palms tingled still from their rasping over the cloth of Andrew's coat, to make sure of the bodily presence of

him; her hair clung in tiny damp curls on her temples and she trembled. Bodily he had been with her. Beyond illusion she had seen herself an infinitesimal image in the dear gray depths of Andrew's eyes; had seen the passionately remembered clean generous curve of Andrew's lips, bending to hers; had felt the beloved weight of his head on her shoulder as she drew him close; had felt the soft thatch of his blond hair against her cheek; had looked down on his bleached, nervously strong hand clasping her own. And yet her husband Andrew—the Andrew of her two years of wifehood, the Andrew she had loved, suffered and worked for and had held to before the world—had not come back to her. She knew now that she had resented and felt her loss in the moment of his hesitating knock. Why had he not hurried in—rushed, blundered, crashed the door wide and crashed it shut—arms, lips, eyes and soul mad to sate themselves after starvation? The Andrew that had come to her had been patient—*patient*—in her arms, had answered the demand of her eyes, lips and broken words gently—answered, but had not demanded in his turn. And the Andrew of her memory had been irresistibly virile, compelling, gaily, boyishly audacious and masterful in a fashion she had contended with and adored. But the life-giving fire of that love—so far from being renewed as she had dreamed—had been quenched by this coming together, as crude, chill daylight makes sickly the lamp that has given aid so sturdily through the dark.

Had the fault been hers? In the eight years there had been three men who had laid siege long and ardently. She had not known temptation, since to be tempted one must feel the desire to yield; but secretly she had welcomed each experience, because it was evidence that she was desirable, that Andrew would find her so. Had she erred in not assuring Andrew of her constancy? It had been so natural, so truly so, that the thought of giving him such assurance had never come to her; and Andrew knew her to be chaste and strong. Had he been, though, in the mood to want

her weak, at this meeting? Men had such whimsies; and, God knew, she could have been weak—weak to hysteria, to abandon, at the first touch of him. But she had fought it back as she had fought her small weaknesses for the eight years—as she had fought back, in these last days, the need for babbling and crying that she had felt on leaving the women she had worked with, at the tea with Weld, at leaving Lindstrom's. Yes, she knew the breast rending and tearing of weakness; but had she yielded, even in a little, what would have become of her in those lonely years? He was ungrateful—shallow, weak, selfish, hideously ungrateful! At the first loosing of her arms he had sidled away to look out on the world that cared not a whit for him, that would shoulder him off at mention of his name; and when she had crept to him again, there had been Weld signaling below—and on her first lying suggestion Andrew had gone down to him, with an eagerness that all her mighty love had failed to stir.

Hurt to the need of defiance, of motion, she began to walk back and forth. "What more can I do?" she broke out, harshly, aloud. "There's nothing more. All the drudgery and lying and humiliation—it has been waste, pure and simple! Well, I suppose I'm strong enough to do without loving. Loving! There are good things left—to see and to do and to eat and to wear. But it has been a long time to be a fool—a long bit of life to waste!"

She stopped before the table again, leaning on it, for her body was strangely slow to obey the scourging of her mind. Her fevered eyes looked down on the violets, the soft mass of shadowy sweetness nestled in its own dull green; and in a curiously abstracted analysis she saw them the antithesis of herself: frail, exquisite embodiments of rapturous martyrdom, of ecstatic giving, like women souls of a sort. Such flowers to her! The kind of typical flower Andrew's friends would choose, of course. Andrew might have loved a—*a violet* woman.

A reasonless, destructive anger seized her so that she cried out fiercely, buried

her hands in the odorous bowl, dragged out the blossoms, twisted and crushed them to pulp in her hot hands. The gust of heavy perfume from the bruised petals caught at her throat; she threw her head aside for air and came to her senses, shamed and wondering. She shuddered at the oily wetness of her fingers; it seemed grievously like having strangled and mangled small living things. Just so, she thought, had she killed every small obtruding weakness all these years: her poor, womanish weakness trembling to life in this and that soft impulse.

Her head came up sharply as though to a call; her hands relaxed and the violets dropped at her feet. She stood so for minutes, strangely quiet, listening, absorbed, and presently spoke—again as though to someone in the room:

"Do you mean—after all—all this time"—she stammered—"that it could be *that*? And I—not know?" Her voice trailed to silence and she stood staring, pondering—listening.

By the murmur of his voice without by his quick tap on the panels and by his very turning of the knob, she knew that the old Andrew was back to her. Somehow—somewhere—in the two hours of his absence he had found himself. She was on the worn davenport, lying as flat and limp as though she had been beaten down, her arm across her eyes; and in the instant before her exhausted body answered the bidding of her will, Andrew saw.

"Rhoda!" In his ejaculation, in his checking, she caught the old distaste of the unpleasant—of scenes and illness and explanations; and with an effort she turned her head and smiled at him reassuringly.

"Just tired a little," she said. "Is it time to dress?" Relief lighted in his face; he was over to her, caught the hand she put out to him and helped her up—up and into his arms, and kissed her—kissed her many times. She winced and caught her breath, but was instantly close to him again, her face upturned.

"Ah, you do love me, Andy—you do?"

"You know it." She felt him tense himself for his next words. "Rhoda, I

know that when I—came—I didn't make you happy; but it was because the minute was too big for me. I was like a man waked too suddenly. I couldn't make it—make *you*—real. It was a queer, numb, dead feeling that I can't explain to you. I had to make sure by degrees—by seeing the small, old things—that I wasn't dreaming. And the sights and the noises and the hustle and hurry and—*smell* of the city, even—and then the fellows. Somehow I came to life, got to be part of it again—wanted you and came straight back to you. I don't understand why—but it is so; and now—"

Her hand against his cheek held his lips away.

"But what if I made it clear to you—oh, my dear boy, my poor boy!—*why* you were dead to me? I've fought it out; I *know*. You're the human, sane, normal, all-alive man that takes his very being from such things. To take you from the blessed ordinary things is to kill you, to—Oh, it came to me so clearly, boy dear—so bitterly real—that what we mean to do we can't do, that what we have done must be undone. Wait, wait! *Andrew, don't put me away from you—*"

At seven the three were to have dined. From seven till half past, coated and hat in hand, Judson Weld patrolled the corridor outside the disturbing door, acutely conscious of storm within, and fearful that if he relaxed guard some curious lodger might chance past and listen. In his own pause before knocking, he had heard Andrew's voice, furious, almost unrecognizable, and a wail of protest from Andrew's wife. At ten minutes past the half he heard Mrs. Baxter speak below and begin her heavy ascent. It was her custom to forget a sufficiency of towels, and to use her pass key to place the forgotten articles after the recently arrived had gone to dinner—all devised to afford her an opportunity for precautionary inspection. Personal belongings—photographs, toilet equipment—spoke to Mrs. Baxter with tongues, and enabled her correctly to adjust her attitude toward their possessor. Let her hear but one accent of Andrew—

In an access of courage and cleverness that surprised himself, Weld darted forward and down halfway.

"Oh, there you are!" he greeted her. "The Andrews were asking for towels—we're late getting out—thank you." And as he spoke he had seized the pile and was upstairs again, rapping peremptorily. A word, a scowl even, of warning he must give.

Andrew opened the door with a jerk and faced out, flushed and disheveled, in an attitude of amazing defiance that altered as he recognized his friend.

"Oh—you?" he said—and hesitated queerly.

"I say—got to be careful," Weld urged in a worried mutter. "Just stopped the landlady from coming with these—talking too loud. Be careful."

"Careful?" repeated Andrew—and laughed, caught the adviser by a lapel and pulled him across the threshold banging the door shut again.

"There!" He took the towels and threw them aside. "Since you've heard, listen to it all—and blame yourself for having befriended us. Not only am I the thief they prove me—"

"Andrew—*Andrew!*" Rhoda put out her hands to him without moving from the wall where she leaned, sick-faced and cowed. Weld turned his startled eyes to her and gaped at the changed woman he saw; but she paid him not the slightest heed. "Not that, Andrew," she implored; "I tell you, it isn't *that* I want!" Andrew laughed again. Some fiendish necromancy seemed to have been at work on him, to have deadened the fineness of him and warped him to the unmanliness Weld had winced to see in their minute of meeting; he looked almost old and gross, weakened by a senile rage.

"Oh, yes, but it is what you want!" He dropped a heavy hand on Weld's shoulder. "I've been all the time since my second coming home to her finding out what she wants, Jud—and I know. She's got nicer names for it—all sorts of white-livered excuses; but what she wants is to have her damned jealousy satisfied. That's a woman; she'll work and wait and plot and lie and suffer for

you—and at the end of it all turn right about and sacrifice you and the whole game to some stinking little vanity. That's what this woman has done. Eight years—all these eight years—I'd stake my life she's been square, and suffered for me and worked for me; and now she's gone back on me for nothing more than that I didn't come to her ardently enough in my first hour from prison—"

"Oh—no, no, *no!*" Weld winced at the moan from her, but Andrew's lips drew up in a dry smile.

"I say yes. She doesn't want me to go this far—sure enough—she wants the fun of threatening and tormenting and seeing me crawl; but I mean to take her up. I've had enough of it! You see, I made a mistake in going out with you, Jud—though she urged it. I tried to tell her how I felt—why I went; but she's jealous of you, of my friends, of what you're thinking.

"So here's the truth: we did that steal together—she and I. In the beginning it was only a thousand that I took—for wedding foolishness and dinners to my friends and flowers and for playing the races—the usual thing; and it was so easy—the money just walked into my pocket. But it worried me, and she saw it; and—she got it out of me. Well, she stood by me. I believe, now, that she liked the secret and the hold on me it gave her." Rhoda turned her head, leaned her forehead against the wall and stayed so, without further word or motion.

"I thought it was love and wifely devotion," went on the grating voice that was Andrew's and not Andrew's, "and I loved her for it and was grateful. The money went, and to hide the theft I took more—you know how it goes; and she found that out and was frightened. But she stood by me—always would, she swore. Blamed the bank for tempting me and pinching me along on a niggardly salary—talked till she made it seem almost right to both of us what I had done—she for me against the world. It put me out of my head; I wanted to show her, to make up to her for what she'd worried, to—make good.

I saw a way. I told her. I was to get what I could—get away if I could, though I didn't hope for that; but if it came to a pinch I knew my friends would get me off light, and we could pretend—she and I—that I was away—working. You see, I didn't know—then—how long a year is—*there*. Well, we put it through. A blonde wig and a picture hat made the woman that took 'em away from scenting out the money I had cached. Rhoda, my wife, was the woman—get it? We worked it out to the littlest details—she clever beyond all I ever could have managed! None knew—even my closest. We played it straight through, even to this; and then we were to go away, naturally, and live as we'd always wanted to live. But she has been unhappy for two hours today—so our eight years and the rest of our lives don't matter; she *must* have satisfaction; for her two hours! That's what a woman is, Jud."

His voice seemed cracking on for a minute after he stopped abruptly; and the horrid echo and the shock of his revelation and the flower scents and the flare of the chandelier—all augmenting, somehow, to an overpowering degree—assailed Judson Weld through four of his senses and left him but one organ with volition, his tongue, which he presently discovered to be maundering. "Yes—yes, I understand, Andy—it's quite safe with me—quite safe, Mrs. Heddington; let's be cool." And then he got his senses back, shut his teeth with a click and looked to the woman, growing hot and apprehensive. Andrew was staring at her vindictively; and they waited.

After a time she lifted herself away from the wall, turned her head and looked at Weld. And he saw, for the first time, that she was *all* woman, pure sex—so hurt, so nakedly revealed that he took a step backward to the door, to get away from a sight not meant for him.

"Wait!" she commanded, not looking at Andrew. "Since I have heard him out he must hear me—through you. Most of it is so—that I lived the eight years in hope of having him all to myself, away

from you who took so much of him from me. I didn't feel guilty or sorry or ashamed, ever. There was no question of good or bad or right or wrong—nothing but Andrew; he was my conscience—everything. I was not like most women—*was* not, I say. But in the years empty of him I believe that my—my soul has taken the chance to grow. Soul? Well, whatever it is that is weak and strong and hungry and enough and pitiful and terrible—I'll call it my soul. It began to hurt me early in my loneliness, and I thought it was 'nerves.' Little by little it broke down all my fine courage and pretense; it made me dread my husband's coming today, because the new Me couldn't go the old way with him any longer—and that meant hurt. Yet if he had come to me as he used to be—but he didn't; only the shell of him came. And after he had gone with you, the hurt of myself got beyond bearing and I didn't fight any longer. I asked, and I saw what I must do to save him and to save myself. I'm not enough for him—not enough to take the place of his friends and his work and his world. I tell him we must stay, give that money back, start new; and whatever of work and hardship and hurt we must pay—I'll pay the half of it. It will be better than to see him grow dead and useless and dreadful—all the Andrew I loved utterly lost. To have him I must share him. I took so much and he gave so freely that I never dreamed how separate we were; but I'm only the woman—only half. The other half he must get from you—his friends, his old life—in his old way. Don't you see? Don't you understand—at all? Can't you see that I'm telling the truth?"

"Yes," Weld answered, "I believe that you are telling the truth; and part of me—partly—understands." And then as she waited, tragic eyes demanding, he realized that he had not really spoken—only felt the words and said them over in such shreds of voice as he was able to grasp. Then, and not till then, she turned to her husband, her face changing and growing tender as their eyes met.

"Dear—you—now that you've heard

me out—don't you understand? Don't you believe?"

He set his jaw. "No, I don't understand. And I don't believe." She put her hands to her face, pressed her eyes shut hard an instant, thrust back her heavy dropping hair, then let her hands fall—and smiled, all love.

"Then—we'll go, Andrew; it shall be as you say. This friend will keep the secret. Somewhere—we'll find happiness—of a sort. I'm capable of being more than I've ever been. You shall love me—and we'll be together. That's what counts with me, more than the saving of my soul—and more, I'm afraid, than the saving of yours. Only take me back again—don't look so! Trust me, and love me, dear!" She came toward him, hands out, the beautiful color flooding to her face, transfiguring her; and Andrew's sneering smile faded as he looked on her, breath coming fast, his eyes reflecting a gleam from the light in hers. Then doubt and anger dyed and twisted his face, and he turned to Weld, flinging out his hands.

"There you have it; scene over, her way won, she's satisfied and ready to go my way again. I'm to dance when she whistles and pay what she pleases. That's the woman of it, Jud—the woman of it!"

"And—oh, you idiot—you're the man of it!" From the strangely shaken depths of himself Judson Weld made reply. "What are you turning to me for? Don't you know when a thing narrows down to two? She is being honest, I tell you, and she'll do whichever—whatever—you say. Only you won't say. You're—making me ashamed of you, Andy." For an instant they looked at each other.

"You," said Andrew incredulously, "you?"

"Yes, I. Dull as I am, I understand her. You *did* want the old town today—wanted *us*. It was like seeing a dead man come alive, to watch you. Maybe you could make new friends, like new places; but you'd always want the old ones, Andy, and always feel like a dog to think you played us so. For you're a heap better than you think you are.

There's work waiting—we've seen to that—though I wasn't to tell you till you were a bit settled. Nothing much, but a living. I'm not saying there won't be hard knocks and nasty hurts; but—cuss it all—you deserve 'em! There; if you want to hang to your filthy money, go ahead. I'm safe. But I'm telling you that sooner or later you'll come back—back to the old places and the old rubs and the fellows that've stood by you. Because we all expected you to play fair. *We* stood by—and that ought to count, don't you know?"

"Count—ought to count!" Andrew snarled at him. "You'll never know how much it counts till you've been where I've been—where I am. I know what you think of me—know what I am; but you're asking me to let eight years—eight years, do you understand?—go for nothing, asking me to consent to let all that be wasted—"

Rhoda was upon him, arms about him, face upturned. "Not that," she prayed him, "not wasted utterly. Oh, my dear, am I nothing? Think what has come to me—and I'm part of you, truly half of you. It has brought me—my womanhood. And it has brought you what could have come in no other way: you'll know how to live, how to weigh the things that count against the little lies that once bewildered us. You know what you were—what I was. Look at me—and tell me if it has been wasted—all that time?"

Very slowly his arms went about her. Into his eyes, held by hers, came the puzzlement, the baffled doubt and belief

of the soul touching the mysteries of Past and To Come. He turned from it helplessly.

"I don't know," he contended. "I tell you—I don't *know*."

"But isn't there the chance," she tempted, "that it wasn't waste—but design? Mayn't it have been meant for you to find yourself so? Don't be wise or worldly or anything but honest with me. I love you. Shall we stay, fight it out together, face it here with the old friends, take the odds against us and welcome them—on that chance?"

He caught her head to his breast, silencing her, for emotion and desire and uncertainty had keyed him almost to snapping. But he fought for and held the whimsical, crooked smile that made light of himself and the inscrutable.

"It'd be a good fight," he said, his narrowed eyes on Weld's working face; "but I might fight till I died and never find out for sure, you know, after all. Why didn't you let me alone? What is this 'Right' that it won't be fooled or shut up? What's a man like me to do when his tribe and his mate turn against him?" His left hand came forward a bit and Weld clutched it; and there Rhoda broke, torn by the terrible sobs of the woman unused to tears. But Andrew kept his smile, though he was paper white and Weld's hand shook in his grip. "You idiots!" he jeered them—but gently. "What do such midgets as we matter? I tell you, you're making a fool of me. . . . But I'll stay, God love you—I'll stay!"



FOREIGNER—What are your streets paved with?
NEW YORKER—Good intentions.



A MAN'S best period is the grammatical period—to know when to stop.

TITLE-TATTLE

By Harold Susman

IT was on board the S.S. *Mammonia* returning from Europe, that three American Heiresses came together—one from New York, one from Chicago and one from Philadelphia.

New York wore a lot of rubies. Chicago wore a lot of emeralds. Philadelphia wore a few pearls.

"I had a perfectly beautiful time!" said New York.

"So did I!" said Chicago.

Philadelphia didn't say a word.

"I stayed in Germany," said New York.

"I stayed in France," said Chicago.

Philadelphia straightened her hair.

"I love Berlin," said New York.

"Paris for me," said Chicago.

Philadelphia clasped her hands.

"I met lots of German noblemen," said New York.

"I met lots of French aristocrats," said Chicago.

Philadelphia pursed her lips.

"I met Baron Graftenstein," said New York.

"I met Count de Fraude," said Chicago.

Philadelphia dropped her eyes.

"And I met Baron Schwindelfeld," said New York.

"And I met Count de Bluffe," said Chicago.

Philadelphia was lost in thought.

"Where did *you* go?" said New York.

"I went to England," said Philadelphia.

"And what did *you* do?" said Chicago.

"I became engaged to the Duke of Cheshire," said Philadelphia. "It is to be announced when we arrive in New York."

"Oh!" said New York and Chicago together.

Philadelphia stifled a yawn.

There was silence.



"WHAT are you going to do for a vacation this year?"
"Wife's going to the mountains for a month."

THE MAXIMS OF METHUSELAH

Concerning Women Before and After the Flood

By Gelett Burgess

1 General observations about women. 6 Three insignificant things to which women attach importance. 10 Women never to be wholly known, 11 but have many easily discernible traits. 14 Of a youth who made the wrong compliment. 18 and a damsel whose work was clumsy. 22-26 Divers precepts. 27 Methuselah, in a parable, sheweth how men insult women. 38 What women win men. 40. Instruction in tact. 43 Women's age not told.

HEAR, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend my words: for the lips of a flattering woman drop as the honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil.

2 As one who putteth sugar upon oysters, so is he who feedeth lies to a woman who loveth him; *they will not down.*

3 As alum to the mouth, as a pebble in the shoe, so is a woman who telephoneth thee overmuch.

4 As hard butter upon a hot plate, as a slippery rug upon a hardwood floor, so is one woman's opinion of another.

5 Crumbs in the bed may be endured, and an eyelash may be removed from the eye: but she who is *always* tardy causeth anguish continually.

6 ¶ There be three things which are little amongst men, but to women they are exceeding great;

7 Crow's feet are passing small, yet do women make much of them;

8 A ring is of little compass, yet it circlet a woman's life;

9 *I love you* are short words, and easily said; yet do women prize them.

10 ¶ Boast not thyself to know women, for thou knowest not what the next damsel shall teach thee.

11 ¶ Where no gasoline is, there the motor stoppeth; and when a man is

married, then do the virgins forsake him.

12 Knowest thou a man who is subtle to please women? Lo, he shall be counted amongst the *Best Sellers*. Seest thou a youth diligent with old women? Behold, his way is made smooth.

13 Knowest thou the land where the damsels eschew confectionery and the young men know not the baseball scores? There shalt thou find the damsel who repeateth not unto her lover the compliments she hath received.

14 ¶ Now there was a virgin in Babylon, who had a lover; and she desired much to be fair in his sight;

15 And after she had spent three hours at the mirror, with rats and puffs and fuller's earth, and myrrh and spike-nard and divers unguents, she descended unto the parlor and welcomed him, saying: Good evening, I *hope* I have not kept thee *long*.

16 And he rose and looked at her with wide eyes, and he said: Lo, how *intellectual* thou lookest!

17 And she rent her hair and gnashed her teeth, and would not be comforted.

18 ¶ And on a time a certain damsel said unto me: Lo, a strange thing have I heard from my neighbor: but surely thou wilt be wroth if I tell thee.

19 But I pressed her sore, saying: Nay, nay, tell thou me, for I desire *much* to know it.

20 Then she answered and said: Behold, three matrons have asked me if I were *engaged* to thee. Is it not absurd?

21 And I fled away from that damsel, yea, unto a far place.

22 ¶ As milk which hath been

skimmed, or as coffee without cream, so is an automobile ride without a comely damsel.

23 As one who biteth upon sandpaper, so is he who striveth against a woman's prejudice.

24 When a virgin beginneth to lose her modesty, it goeth like a silk skirt; yea, as a silk stocking which hath begun, to run, it goeth with exceeding great speed.

25 As an ice cream soda at a cheap drug store, so is she who loveth not her bath; and as for her who weareth a soiled shirtwaist, she is as the carnation which hath turned magenta.

26 A comely damsel may eat with her fingers and it shall be forgiven her; but *cuteness* abideth not in the matron when she hath grown fat.

27 ¶ Now there was a youth who lived in the Land of Nod, on the east of Eden, and his name was Dub, *which is to say*: He who is Slow in the Head.

28 And he fell enamored of a maiden who dwelt by the river Hiddekel; and her name was *Bessie*.

29 Now it came to pass that Dub invited the damsel to sit at meat with him in a public place, and as they sate waiting they listened to the sound of loud timbrels and saw much people.

30 And as they devoured their lobster a virgin entered that place and took her seat at the next table. And behold, she was passing fair, her form was the form of an artist's model, and her face was like unto a cover by Harrisonfisher.

31 And it came to pass that when Dub had gazed long at the virgin he smiled and said unto Bessie: Is the virgin not comely, and findeth she not favor in thy sight? I say unto thee: She is a *peach*.

32 And Bessie regarded the virgin as if she had seen her not, and she answered, saying: Of a truth thou hast spoken aright; surely the virgin is *exceeding* fair. Yea, she hath dove's eyes,

and her cheeks are pomegranates under a lamp of silver. Behold, her hair is as the shadow when night falleth, and her teeth are as a string of pearls whereof each one is perfect.

33 And Dub smiled in his folly, saying: Now surely he is a fool who saith: *All* women are jealous and know not how to approve virtue. Behold, I will publish thy magnanimity before all men, for thou art a woman of ten thousand; thou canst praise *another woman*.

34 And they arose and left that place; and Dub thrust out his chest.

35 But as for Bessie, her smile was the smile of one who holdeth the poles of an electric battery.

36 And it came to pass that Dub called upon Bessie after that time seventy and seven times, and she was *not at home*.

37 For she had cast him out into utter darkness, and his name was known no more in her house.

38 ¶ A maiden of even ways may win a man's love, but she who swayeth men's hearts to move them unto her bidding, hath a temper of fire and water.

39 Lo, men have said unto me: *Any* woman by diligence can capture *any* man; but I say unto thee, verily, verily, it taketh a woman of subtlety to keep him in bondage.

40 ¶ My son, when thou invitest thy love to dinner, let thine order be much, and thine appetite little,

41 And when thou escortest her to and fro, watch not for the station, nor descend till thou hast passed it,

42 That she may think pleasantly of thee when she is alone, saying: Hath he not forgotten all save my presence? Lo, how he loveth me!

43 ¶ Ask not one damsel's age of another, lest the wise mock thee, and the old men say: Lo, thou simpleton, where is that which thou wilt not believe?



A FEW hot words will sometimes cause great coolness.

A LAGGARD IN LOVE

By Katharine Metcalf Roof

MR. DUNCAN ASHER, having selected his chair and its placing upon the clubhouse veranda with that methodical seriousness which characterized all his movements, settled himself with a frown to the perusal of his conservative evening paper. The frown was not directed toward any special person or idea. It was rather an indication of a general widespread determination to discourage the trivial and light-minded. Duncan Asher was known as "Dash" in the Malden summer colony—a happily descriptive combination evolved from his rightful title by Billy Averill. When the name was first applied to him he had protested, "Oh, say now!" but he had soon, as Billy expressed it, "answered to the name." Billy insisted that he was flattered by the attention. Dash, although inarticulate, was not shy. He did not stand in awe of woman. If her wit was light and her laughter frequent he felt that she needed masculine discipline. If she was even mildly analytical—a process that puzzled and antagonized him—he characterized her as "sharp" and remarked that she needed what he termed "calling down."

It was after an entire winter of weighing pros and cons that he had decided to spend the summer at Malden. A sculptor in the same studio building had called his attention to the little colony which consisted of a few scattered houses and an old-fashioned farmhouse converted into a clubhouse where the members took their meals and met for purposes of a sociability free from hampering obligations. Dash recalled having heard the name of Malden several times upon the lips of recognized members of his

profession. Gradually the idea took root in his mind and he set to work to carry it into action. There were no specified formalities conditioning entrance. The qualification was entirely one of suitability. For while the unsuitable would inevitably slip in from time to time—as in the case of relatives of the colonists—there was a rigorous attempt to prevent its occurrence. Dash obviously was not suitable, yet it happened that particular summer that the size of the colony had been considerably depleted by a number of European trips, and it had become advisable not to say imperative for financial reasons to provide substitutes. The very word "substitute" in itself implies inferiority and apology, and the apology of Dash's introducer contained the qualifying statement that he was a sculptor inhabiting a large studio in a well-known studio building, and belonged to a popular professional club, and had therefore an acquaintance with most of the painters, architects and sculptors in town.

So he was admitted, and arrived in Malden the latter part of May with his neat, compact luggage and settled down. No one had ever so completely settled down, Rhoda Heslith observed. He took a commuters' train every day to his studio, which he treated as a place of business with inflexible hours for opening and closing. How Dash had elected to become a sculptor in the first place was a circumstance that called for explanation. Rhoda Heslith, seated also upon the veranda, watching him over the edge of her book, was struck afresh with the incongruity of it. Certainly some motive of business perspicacity must have started him, rather than what is known

in terms of Ruskin as the "love of the beautiful." He had shown frequent evidences of alertness in matters of affairs. It would not have been just to call him "stingy," as a college girl guest had ruthlessly done. The quality that he revealed at times was more the frank cautiousness of the provincial shopkeeper who realizes no sophisticated necessity to disguise or conventionalize that cautiousness.

Yet, uninspired as were his face and the products of his art, one could not, Rhoda reflected, set him down as a failure in his inexplicably chosen career. He had thriftily acquired a large acquaintance among what he described as "solid business men." Through their influence he had received a number of orders for municipal statues and odds and ends of sculptural work upon public buildings. These products were as methodically accurate as the schedule of his life. Not a line in the face, not a crease in the trousers was neglected. There was not a sketchy, broad or "loose" touch anywhere. The result was that conglomeration of facts which the artist well knows is not truth, but which is likely to be far more gratifying to the Philistine taste so justly represented upon committees controlling public works. So Duncan Asher, although not dependent upon his accurate sculpture for his daily bread, and being besides a bachelor of frugal tastes almost mysteriously devoid of family ties, made, as Billy Averill expressed it, a "good thing out of it."

Rhoda Hesmith, watching him, reflected that this fact of his being a bachelor was, after all, the incongruous thing in his simple psychology. He was so obviously of the pattern of the high-principled domestic tyrant. He had, one felt, so large an unused store of disciplinary activity. Prohibitives rose instinctively to his tongue. Yet he was not harsh or unkind, merely impervious to the reflections of other natures. If convinced of the worthiness of a case of need, he would have contributed justly in proportion to his income, for Dash was one of those who are the stronghold of organized charity. He believed, in

all fields of activity, in diagram, organization, facts. He did not suffer from *weltschmerz*; he was untormented by dreams or moods. The penetrating, evanescent wit of the little community passed over his head like a circling flight of butterflies. If the joke was turned upon him—for light wits must inevitably be tempted to play about the impervious—he never suspected the fact. Apparently even Billy Averill's frankest thrusts did not, in Billy's phraseology, "get through." If Dash had had any consciousness of inferiority in the gay assemblage his condition would have been indeed pitiable, but the truth was that on the contrary he felt superior to the frivolous crowd. He honestly did not admire the women of the colony, although he was glad to talk to Rhoda Hesmith, who was almost the only one that ever started conversation with him. Rhoda was the wife of a prominent young architect, a fact which made association with her not only desirable but from Dash's provincial standpoint "safe."

"How can you stand talking to Dash?" Edith Arnold had exclaimed with amused impatience. Rhoda smiled. "He is so incredibly naïve. His processes are still those of the village grocery. It is refreshing. The veneer of the frock coat and tall hat is so thin." Under her characteristic motive of self-entertainment Rhoda had nevertheless another of a semi-serious sort that concerned itself with Dash. Rhoda exemplified the modern psychologic form of the matchmaker. Her spirit revolted against the restless vagaries of the modern unattached woman with her futile yearning for a career. "I am so tired of the woman with a soul," she would complain to her husband. Happily married herself, she longed to draw all other women into making the experiment. She had perceived in Duncan Asher available, if not inspiring, material. She saw, she analyzed to her entertained husband, that he so obviously missed a wife whom he could advise and reprove, to whom he could dictate, for whom he could lay down maxims, whose expenditures he could limit, and to whom he

would be consistently, conscientiously kind. The very way that he sat down, cleared his throat and opened his paper, Rhoda insisted, brought before one the picture of him as the autocrat of the fireside. He must infallibly have drifted to this manifest destiny had it not been for another characteristic which inhibited the first. Dash was cautious—hence the adhesiveness of the name bestowed upon him by Billy Averill. More than that, he was apprehensive. He feared capture. It was not so much an overvaluation of self as a characteristic necessity to assure himself that he had done the best possible for himself, combined with a fear that the girls and women who mechanically strove to entertain him were laying matrimonial traps for his unwary feet. Consequently in his relations with women the word "intentions" lurked ever in the background of his mind. He admittedly feared the inspiring of false hopes. Therefore, not being by nature ardent or emotional, inner forces had never prompted him to do violence to the dictates of his wisdom. "Plenty of time yet," Dash frequently assured himself. He had, Rhoda discovered, met a girl he had admired the preceding summer on an educational European trip. She divined that Dash had considered her,

"Yes, she was a bright girl," he reflected, adding with a perceptible increase of respect in his manner: "Guess they had plenty of money, too." Then he had stopped there, as Rhoda characterized it afterward, "like a cow before a fence," impotent against the wall of his own nature.

Of course, Rhoda reflected, any of the regular Malden women were too far removed from Dash's requirements, however much their condition, theoretically considered, might be improved by matrimony. She mentally turned over as candidates some of the pathetic art students of her acquaintance, a pale young librarian—she was probably too intelligent—a rosy browbeaten governess to the spoiled children of a rich friend. She had, she confided to Langdon Heskith, several under consideration. Then Louise Brown had come to Malden to visit

the wife of a professor of literature, and Rhoda began to have definite hopes of laying the foundation of Dash's hearthstone. She was deeply interested in what she called Louise Brown's "effect" upon Dash. It was so accountable. It worked out so logically like a problem in algebra. She had noted Dash's bovine contemplation of Louise the very first day. The topic at that dinner had become for a moment serious, and Dash had expressed himself with the emphatic uninformed didacticism of the limited man whose opinions are derived from the editorial column of his daily paper. No one in the colony ever answered Dash seriously, but Rhoda observed that Louise Brown's large brown eyes regarded him deferentially across the table. Yes, in the case of Louise Brown there was an intrinsic suitability. She was better than the anemic librarian or the rosy governess or the soulful art students. She was a teacher in a girls' school, obviously pretty, with round pink cheeks, large dark eyes, small red lips. "She was always dressed with exquisite daintiness in fresh pink and blue gingham of the type purchasable ready made in good department stores. She was superior to Duncan in information probably, but she could no doubt surround him with the imaginative halo invoked by the idea of "the artist"; and she was also literal—as literal as he was. Her soft eyes regarded one helplessly in the presence of a joke. She inferred incorrectly, anxious to participate. Then after the elusive, fantastic thing had been translated to her, dulled of its *esprit*, she would laugh, showing her pretty, even, white teeth. Yet she was universally voted a "sweet" girl, and provided the attitude required was informing rather than impressionistic, she was able to make her contribution to the conversation.

After her self-amusing habit, Rhoda began what she called "constructing" Louise Brown's environment for her husband the day after her arrival.

"She lives in a hall bedroom in a well kept boarding house where they are strict about references. She has several brown prints upon her wall, a Sistine

Madonna, a Murillo, an Andrea del Sarto, also a Rossetti and a Burne-Jones. There is a shelf, or perhaps a bookcase, filled with her text books and books with stories of the Wagner operas and about how to judge a picture and how to listen to music. She may have a few volumes of Ibsen or Bernard Shaw which she has borrowed or taken out of a library, but she thinks they are morbid. Her bureau is in perfect order, and covered with silver toilet articles and photographs of her family and college friends in silver frames given to her by her pupils at Christmas. "The only trouble is," she concluded, passing on to consideration of the alliance with Dash, "that her profession is written rather plainly upon her already. Nothing, unfortunately, writes itself so quickly as teaching. But I don't believe Dash will feel that."

Louise Brown had never questioned of herself as to whether she "seemed like a teacher" or not. Like Duncan, she was not analytical, although, because of her sex, somewhat more touched with introspectiveness. She did not flinch before acknowledgment of her profession; neither, to do her justice, did she sentimentalize it. It had seemed the obvious thing to do upon leaving college rather than to be dependent longer upon her mother's slender income. But having neither the egoism which makes the occupation of teaching an outlet to some women, nor the mysticism and altruism which make it a sacred calling to others, Louise's life had unconsciously begun to pall upon her. She had been conscious several times during the last year that the schoolroom had been noisy at recess, that the children giggled pointlessly and that she had been glad when vacation had come.

She liked Duncan, Rhoda decided. Her easy color rose when he approached her. She had shown sympathy with his attitude the very first evening. Milly Burch had been giving an amusing account of some vegetarian neighbors who had furnished them with much harmless entertainment. "Oh, come now; what do you want to talk about people like that for?" Dash had protested with a frown and a didactic shake of the head.

"Let up. You've knocked the Larkins long enough." In the laugh that followed, which obviously puzzled Louise Brown but did not disturb Dash, Rhoda, studying them both, decided that Duncan had been encouraged by Louise's unspoken approbation, for ordinarily his protests against their nonsense were limited to, "Oh, come now," or "Enough of that," or perhaps only the inarticulacy of a growl. But that night he had remonstrated even further. Edith Arnold was giving an account of the capsizing of a boat in the shallow, muddy inlet that afternoon. Her sketch of her friend's appearance when they had met some fashionable acquaintances in an automobile on their way home produced the peals of laughter that came with such ease at Malden. Duncan again frowned.

"I thought Miss Barclay was your friend," he reproved Edith Arnold, who barely attended. He concluded, unmindful of the fact that he addressed the back of Edith's head: "Then, why do you want to go roasting her like that?" Duncan retired behind his evening paper unmindful of Billy Averill's joyous whoop, "Oh, Dash, you're too good to be true!" He had met an eloquent look from Louise Brown's softly shining eyes.

"Why, they are made for each other!" Rhoda exclaimed afterwards to her husband. "Any criticism, any distinction you make against any element in anything just means to Louise Brown that you don't like it. You will see her favorite reading is appreciations and essays upon the good, the true and the beautiful. Any joke will always seem to her unkind."

Langdon Heslith had to admit that Rhoda's perception as usual was correct. Poor Louise was always rushing to the defense of someone apparently attacked in the table or after-dinner talk. Their obvious lack of appreciation of her sympathy never ceased to be a mystery and a matter of pain to her.

So Rhoda began to help the thing along by all the insidious means in her power. Her one anxiety was that Duncan might become conscious and take fright. So far, she decided, as they sat together upon the veranda, that catas-

trophe had not occurred. Several times she had seen him, under cover of the bantering talk, draw his chair next to Louise Brown's and tell her in an undertone of his plans for a statue competition. Rhoda had observed that his face looked almost animated during these conversations. It was, to be sure, a face only capable of the stronger shades of expression. Given features of blunt inflexible regularity partially covered by beard and mustache of a peculiar blackness, the calm dark eyes of a ruminative animal, a placid, indeterminate mouth that in moments of attention relaxed until it was undeniably open, and you have a type in which the inner subtleties of emotion are not readily detectable.

One could not rely upon the revelations of Dash's face, Rhoda decided, but must trust rather to the direct manifestations of his actions. These were not excessively encouraging. She recalled that since Louise Brown's arrival Dash had shown his usual unmistakable signs of drowsiness at an early hour. He had, as usual, yawned audibly several times before betaking himself to his couch. But then, on the other hand, he had not performed that act until half past ten, when his usual retiring hour was ten o'clock. And Sunday afternoon she had met them returning from a walk. That from Dash's standpoint might almost seem to betoken "intentions." Dash had returned her greeting sheepishly. She hoped that inadvertent meeting had not alarmed him. Even as she was considering this disturbing point, Louise Brown herself came up the steps dressed for dinner in a fresh violet muslin of a shade too definite, the pink in her cheeks deepening at Dash's recognition. He did not rise at her approach; his greeting might have seemed cavalier to the critical, but very shortly after Louise Brown had settled herself decorously in the vicinity of the married woman he rose and came toward them impartially offering his paper to both ladies. Then he glanced at the book Louise Brown held unopened and frowned.

"What you reading?"

Louise turned up the cover. Dash took in the title and shook his head in

reproof. "You don't want to read that." His manner was corrective, but Louise Brown seemed to like it. She turned her soft eyes up to his with interested apprehension.

"Really—why not?"

Dash was not accustomed to having his literary opinions considered at Malden—although he had probably not definitely realized that fact, and with the individual of Dash's type the pleasure probably lies in the expression—yet he would not have been human if he had not been moved by the flattering deference of Louise Brown's attitude. His frown deepened as he cleared his throat. He had read the book himself, having heard the name tossed about in the Malden talk. He had not understood what it was about, and when a book affected him that way he felt as he now expressed himself.

"Unhealthy." It was the epithet the editorials in his paper applied to the works of Nietzsche, Lombroso and other foreign writers whose names were only a conglomeration of letters to Dash. The psychologic novel, as opposed to a "good straight story," he felt to belong in the same class.

"So that is your feeling about it?" Louise Brown meditated. "That is very interesting." She spoke in the slow tone of one assimilating a new and striking idea. It may have been the first time Dash had had one of his utterances called interesting. In any case, Louise's tribute, as Billy would have said, "got through." A light came into his placid face. Louise Brown turned hers persistently up to the sky.

"Aren't the clouds wonderful tonight?" she murmured. And Dash agreed that they were, and after a moment suggested that they walk up to the turn of the road where they could get a better view.

Rhoda Heslith watched Louise Brown gather up her violet skirt, revealing an immaculate but substantial underskirt, and walk off beside Dash's bulky figure until the syringa bushes hid them from sight. She felt the satisfaction of the mathematician who sees the problem evolving according to rule.

II

It all went to her satisfaction for about a week. A gradually increasing tinge of intimacy had crept into Dash's manner and Louise Brown's smile. Then a feather-headed youth by the name of Dicky Hardenberg and a foolish little woman by the name of Mattie Whitely arrived upon the scene. Dicky was the dramatic critic of a light-minded evening paper, who carried its easy jests and facile slang into his personal life and vocabulary. He was unmarried, the congenital bachelor, as Dash was, according to Rhoda, the incipient husband. He was popular because always in good spirits. Mattie Whitely was the youthful mistake of a silent young mural painter who, if not entirely reconciled to the fact that his wife was a simpleton, had at least come to accept it with philosophy. Mattie, whose tastes were too undeveloped even to provide her with sufficient amusement, had an incurable passion for matchmaking of the old-fashioned sort. Her transparent attempts were ordinarily flected aside, as were the doings of the unimportant at Malden, but Louise Brown was not of the stuff to be able to cope with her, and unfortunately Mattie set about her task of "helping along" with characteristic directness. She began at once providing the lovers with opportunities to be alone. She approached Dash with a smile the very evening after her arrival.

"Come, let's walk over to Long Bridge, Mr. Asher." Then she added coquettishly: "Miss Brown is going, and Paul and I have something particular to talk about."

Dash, as Billy Averill afterwards described it, showed the whites of his eyes at that. "Sorry; can't go," he said shortly. "Promised to call on the Warrens tonight." The Warrens were a middle-aged couple living about three-quarters of a mile down the road.

Mattie was undiscouraged. "All right then; we will go that way and walk along with you."

Dash's face became brick red; Louise Brown's color also rose. "Do you know, Mrs. Whitely, I don't believe I can go,

after all; I—I have some letters to write. I had quite forgotten them." Somehow she made her escape from Mattie's schoolgirl teasing to "come on."

After that Rhoda took Mattie aside and made some pointed suggestions to her, but that foolish little person, alas, did not have sufficient continuity in her mental processes to be able to keep her promise not to help the lovers along. Then there was Dicky Hardenberg to contribute his share of spoiling things. Dicky, although too chivalrous for all his addleheadedness to make the girl uncomfortable, nevertheless indulged in innumerable jokes at the expense of the potential lover. So the inevitable happened in spite of Rhoda Heskith's diplomacy. Dash was frightened—so badly frightened that he scarcely dared to look at Louise Brown and avoided her, Billy Averill remarked, "as if she were a creditor." And Louise Brown met the situation with dignity. It seemed scarcely conceivable, Rhoda reflected, that even a girl inexperienced with men, as she divined Louise Brown to be, could weave any veil of romance about Dash. Yet she perceived this girl embodied the tragedy of a type in that, deprived of the rightful romance of girlhood by the conditions of her life, she had become sentimentally idealistic and pathetically ready to drape even so prosaic a figure as that of Dash with the garments of illusion. So she did what she could to counteract the destructive work of Mattie Whitely and Dicky Hardenberg. With Louise she discussed the curiously stimulating effect of competition upon the masculine mind, and gradually led her into an appearance of mild flirtatiousness with the ever ready Dicky Hardenberg, although Dicky obviously had uphill work trying to make even his unobtrusive jests comprehensible to Louise's anxious interest. To Dash she commented upon Dicky's evident pleasure in Louise Brown's society and upon Louise's great popularity with the opposite sex. And Dash had lifted his head from his paper and listened, bovinely attentive. "I guess that's right. She's a bright girl—the brightest girl here."

"More than that, she is very pretty, an unusually attractive girl," Rhoda added with exactly the right degree of emphasis.

"That's right," Dash agreed again, emboldened by Rhoda's impersonal tone which, he perceived at once, conceived of him as indifferent to Louise Brown. A great relief overspread his features, which had clouded at her first mention of Louise Brown's name. After that Rhoda saw to her delight that he began to recover from his panic and had begun paying Louise such uncompromising attentions as offering her his evening paper when he was through with it, when family duties—a call which Rhoda felt Louise never disobeyed—withdrew her permanently from Malden. Yet Rhoda looked in vain for any signs of emotion or regret in Dash. The day Louise left he ate an excellent dinner, became sleepy at nine thirty and relapsed into slumber upon the artistic diwan of the club living room as if it had been the general room of a farmhouse, to the entertainment of the other loiterers. The veneer of the tall hat and frock coat, which, as Rhoda had commented, slipped easily from Dash in conditions of familiarity, had vanished. Rhoda, observant of the unesthetic stages of his encroaching slumber from over the edge of his discarded evening paper, felt a quick revulsion. He was not worthy of dainty Louise Brown; then, even as she made the decision, she wondered if, after all, Louise would not be better off married to unromantic Dash than wearing out the rest of her youth and freshness teaching school.

III

OCCUPIED as she was in town, Rhoda did not forget the case of Louise Brown, and one evening she invited her to dinner with Dash and another man and woman—not to make the situation too marked to Dash's apprehensions. It seemed to her that things went well. Dash talked a good deal for him, with less than his customary didacticism. He did not become sleepy at nine thirty; he even offered without suggestion from Rhoda to escort Louise home.

"At last," Rhoda exclaimed when the door had closed upon Louise's effusive good nights, "I believe we have started the heavy old thing moving. Now perhaps he will keep on with the momentum of his own weight."

Langdon Heskith laughed. "Material unworthy of your finesse, my dear."

"Dash, without doubt," Rhoda agreed. "But poor Louise Brown! She is a tiresome little thing, of course, but the type is so tragic. She is all femininity with nothing to focus it upon. I must rescue her from a spinster fate if possible."

"Why not seek a worthier mate?" the amused husband of the matchmaker suggested.

"Ah, but it is not so easy," Rhoda deprecated. "The whole situation is upside down. It is even worse for girls who are cleverer than Louise Brown. Edith Arnold said the other day the only men that can afford to marry bore one to death. It's the way things are in America. The men that are making money haven't time for anything else, so that they seem heavy to a large class of American women, who, however superficial are at least aware of numbers of things undreamed of in the male's philosophy. It's no use for people above average intelligence to fall in love with each other unless they happen to have money—which the literary or artistic man whose tastes are above those of the average citizen isn't likely to make if he hasn't it already. The best that can happen to a woman whose vocation is the home is to be driven by her maternal and domestic instincts into marriage with an inadequate substitute."

Langdon Heskith smiled his whimsical smile. "Where do we come in?" But Rhoda was ready with her answer. "We are in the small class of the exceptions. Louise Brown is in another class; she is the girl of refinement and education who is not so exacting, but who is shut off by the conditions of her life from meeting men. The girl from out of town who comes to New York without friends and earns her living in some place that does not bring her in contact with men, and living in a boarding house hall bedroom,

has little or no chance. Yet choice of a husband with a girl like Louise Brown ought not to be much of a problem. It does seem as if I might do better for her. I believe I won't try to lift Dash any longer." Rhoda's reasoning was of the sort supposed to be typically feminine in that it frequently landed her in its conclusion in a contradiction of her original statement.

She did not, however, adhere to her final threat. Meeting Dash one day in a Fifth Avenue stage appropriately dressed for the social hour, she contrived to slip in an inquiry about Louise Brown. Had Dash seen her since the night of her dinner? Dash had not. The admission irritated Rhoda into directness. "Why don't you go to see her? You must have plenty of evenings on your hands."

A light of inspiration slowly illuminated Dash's substantial features. "I believe I will," he said.

But a month later, running across him at the Architectural League exhibit, Rhoda ascertained that he had not been to call on Louise Brown. "Not yet," Dash phrased it.

On one of Rhoda Heskith's afternoons late in the season when callers were few Louise Brown dropped in. She lingered until two other feminine guests who had arrived after her had departed, and Rhoda divined from her manner and a look in her eyes that she had something to tell her, and indeed the door had scarcely closed upon the last guest when Louise began.

"I waited because I wanted to tell you of my engagement." Rhoda fell back in her chair breathless with suspense. Was it possible, as she had prophesied to Langdon, that Dash set in motion had actually arrived there of his own weight? "He is a very virile man," Louise outlined enthusiastically. "I find his talks so stimulating. There is so much of uplift about him. I want you to meet him." Not Dash, after all! Then she realized that Louise was explaining further that he was a minister, a widower with three children, two of them quite grown up.

When she had gone, Rhoda sat in the

firelight whimsically reflecting. Even with the three children and the moral uplift he was probably more alive than poor Dash. In any case it was a relief to have Louise Brown settled. Her meditations were interrupted by the arrival of her husband, who instantly demanded tea. In the task of making it fresh for him she forgot for the moment the prospective happiness of Louise Brown. Just as she was about to disclose it her husband spoke: "By the way, I saw a friend of yours today." He paused to test his tea. "I don't want to hold out false hopes, but I think there is a chance that he is on the road to satisfying one of the many dearest wishes of your heart."

"Which wish? Which friend?" Rhoda put the question absently.

"One of your unselfish matrimonial bureau projects. I met Asher at the club. He spoke of Malden. Thinks he will go again next summer."

"He will go," Rhoda put in with conviction, "the habit started, for the rest of his natural life."

"The habit started. There lies the element of hope," Heskith responded. "He said that by a curious coincidence he was on his way to call on Louise Brown. I remembered to say—on your behalf: 'How is she this winter?' and he assured me rather hastily that he had not called before, although he had been intending to for some time."

Rhoda smiled. "I wonder if he really got there? Well, in any case, he is too late. Louise has just been in and announced her engagement to a Congregational clergyman with three children."

Heskith whistled. "Then she is definitely off your hands. But Dash—"

Rhoda interrupted with asperity. "Don't mention his name. I don't want to see or hear of the creature again!"

Heskith threw back his head and laughed. "According to the rules of fiction Dash ought to be crushed by the too-lateness of this."

"Instead of which," defined Rhoda, rising, "he will say: 'Bright girl. Hope she's doing well. Some day I'll have to think of getting married myself.'"

PRE-YANKEE RENAISSANCE

By Ann Mazzanovich and Grace Duffie Boylan

WITH the Yankee renaissance in full swing between the sea on the east and the western sea, with Colonial silver and Colonial mahogany agleam and aglow among pre-Revolutionary carpets and hangings, one wonders what has become of the typical American household furnishings of thirty years ago, when body Brussels and ingrain carpets flourished and cursing movers staggered up endless stairs under the weight of mortuary slabs which topped the bedroom "sets."

The like of these covers are topping the movers now for the most part—peace to them; and upon the slabs the stone cutters have etched day and age. But the bureaus know them no more.

It is interesting at this point to consider that, of all the well remembered articles of furniture of the period mentioned, the marbles are the only things that have been traced to their final and appropriate end. The "elimination of things" has become a shibboleth.

But where? But whence?

Has the ground yawned to swallow that for which forests fell, for which logs jammed the streams, sawmills sliced raw timbers, factories steamed and glued noble wood into ignoble forms and hid the beauty of grain with unholy varnishings? Did they go up in smoke in some stupendous holocaust? Or did Atlantis get them?

Where are the "what-nots" of yesterday?

And what was a "what-not" without a seafaring uncle?

It was he who returned from the ports of the world with sandalwood box and obese Buddha, with carved ivory and Benares brasses, and the conch shell

which still brings the sound of strange seas to a landlocked memory.

What has become of the stereoscope, with its double-barreled views, that lay on the under shelf of the center table?

And where is the center table that stood beneath the hanging lamp with dangling prisms, and upheld the flowers that bloomed in wax under a crystal dome?

Gone.

And with it the family Bible, with its birth records, and the plush-bound album that substantiated, with dated photographs, what otherwise might have passed for apocryphal writings concerning the age of Maud or Matilda, and the autograph album, kittercornering; shrine of sentiment and philosophy:

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever—

a monotonous first part occupation persistently pursued.

Remember me is all I ask,
But, if remembrance be a task,
Forget me—

a proposition invariably followed along the lines of least resistance.

Then came the autographed Spencerian hawk from the hand of the business college student, a circling swoop over the meaty Apostolic *mot*:

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing—
subtly conveying an intention to escape calamity.

It would take as many storehouses as Joseph built for the seven years of plenty to hide from modern sight the crocheted "tidies" alone, that afflicted the patent rockers. Even the significance of their polite name, "antimacassar," guard-

against-greased-hair, has eluded the present generation. They have vanished with the perfumed, pomaded polls.

Yet they were wont to cling malignantly to the shoulders of every bashful young man seated in the best room, whether he were calling curate, college boy or country cousin. Many a youth of that time wore a chair tidy on his coat collar, where the man of today wears a blur of rice powder which a breath would blow away.

There is no great matter for speculation as to what becomes of the rice powder. It is borne out on the air and redistributed with other dust, assailing without distinction the throat of stranger or lover. But the "tidy," that tangible tatting thing of threads and snatches, could not have been dissolved, disintegrated or dissipated. It *was*—and *is*. But where?

Where is that frail uplifter of art, that heart-shaped, wobbly-legged, gimp-edged table that supported the Rogers group?

What has become of that fine steel engraving of the young widow of Stephen A. Douglas—whose early remarriage made it necessary for the sentimental publishers to make the picture typify all womanhood by renaming it, "Longing"?

Of all the myriad moods of mind
That through the soul come thronging,
Which one was e'er so dear, so kind,
So beautiful, as longing?

There were Landseers in those days.

And, too, the heart stirred with emotion at sight of "Daniel in the Lions' Den," and dimly connected him with one who had come to (untimely) judgment.

Where is the square piano? And the cabinet organ, real or folding?

Where are the vases that flanked the clock on the parlor mantel?

Time has gone on. *Vase fugit!*

Only within the halls of memory is the antlered deer rug on the threshold. And there also is the cherub in crude wools beside the mastiff, done in pink.

But they once graced the parlor in the good company of the excellent if modest portrait bust of Charles Dickens, which gave a literary tone to the room—a qual-

ity borne out by the presence of Hill's "Manual," *Godey's Lady's Book* and the poets, in red morocco, close at hand. The naïve honesty which named them has vanished with the "pillow shams," those triumphs of needlework and hand laundering, glossy with starch and weighty with moral mottoes, which were fastened to the tall headboard by means of a tricky spring—smoothly adjustable under the hand of the deft housemaids but, by night, smothering like Othello or outdoing Macbeth in cold ability to murder sleep—"shams" of 'broidery and lace and worsted sayings.

I slept and dreamed that life was beauty;
I woke to find that life was duty.

Small wonder!

"Asleep" and "Awake," guardians of every "genteel" spare room wall. The cherubs of Raphael are not so well remembered.

But it was the spatter work splasher that conveyed to the sometime guest the intimation that the impeccable purity of the calcimined walls should and *must be preserved*.

There upon their remote racks, embossed towels held themselves aloof. The gasping, snorting, riotous bather would get no encouragement from them, not from the least among those squares of incommunicable white that no one ever dared to call a "wash rag." A betraying smear on the surface of the spotless thing was washed out with guilty haste. There was a room that one must enter clean, the pilgrim cloak removed, the sandals at the door.

There was no lack of culture, of refinement, of gentle hospitality in American homes at that or any other period. But there was a distinct decadence in popular taste in material surroundings which accompanied the unaccountable architectural *mésalliances*, the hodgepodge of styles which continued until the Columbian Exposition.

Then dawned the era of better things. The revival of Sheraton, of Chippendale, of Morris in house furnishings brought about a new interest in the long abandoned handicrafts of home. Rag carpets, braided rugs, homemade "Mission" furniture began to drive out clut-

ter and reestablish form and color harmonies. This wave, gaining power, has swept on to dignified simplicity. But the burning question is unanswered:

What has become of the gilded rolling pin that held the elusive button hook?

It was suspended from the dressing bureau bracket, behind the cut glass cologne bottle on the right side, by

means of a blue ribbon fastened to the handles.

It is not in the attic.

In fact, very few of the things sought for are there.

It has completely disappeared. And where it and the cardboard hair receiver and the moss lamp mat have gone cannot be learned until the return of those who have adventured into yesterday.



COMPANIONED

By Margaret Lyle

ACROSS the world your voice is calling me.
 I feel its throbbing cadence through the cloud
 Of deeply cherished memories that thrill
 The very depths of me, and soft enshroud
 Each grief in peace, a happiness so full,
 My joyous heart would cry it all aloud.

Across the weary miles your face stands clear
 In sharp relief against the dreary waste
 Of separation and of joy deferred.
 My heart cries to the laggard time: "Make haste!"

Across the world yourself is calling me—
 Your voice, your face, the very heart of you;
 You call in dreams and fill my waking thoughts.
 I can but wait, but wait the long hours through
 Until that sometime when we may
 Love's springtime in our deeper joy renew.

Across the world your voice is calling me.
 In every heartbeat draws your presence near.
 The days are lonely, love, and yet so full
 Of you that I am sweet-companioned here.



MARRIAGE begins with a promise and ends in a compromise.

SOCIETY'S GOLDEN RULES

By Terrell Love Holliday

DO unto others as you would have them do unto you *if it is considered good form in your set*, not otherwise.

Do not envy your friend his country seat—it may have a tack in it.

It is more blessed to give a ball than to receive a bawling out because you do not thus discharge your social indebtedness.

It is not permissible to give a caller a calling down.

Love your neighbor as yourself, but be discreet.

Wear a loud gown when you go to the Opera; you cannot expect to drown Wagner with your voice alone.

Do not covet your neighbor's husband—he may not be as rich as your own. Nor her man servant—his English accent may have been acquired in Hoboken; and possibly he did not "bottle" for Lord Beachump at all. Nor her maid servant—who, if you got her, might not be able to give you such a complexion as her present mistress wears. Nor her cook—who, on the second day, might hand you a roast and migrate.

It is in bad taste to tell people face to face how many thousands your diamond necklace cost; but if you can induce the Society Editor to print the figures it is perfectly proper to do so.

Pay your bridge debts, even if you have to stand off your laundress. A gentleman or lady might really need the money to hire a taxi, whereas the laundress would undoubtedly squander it on rent or a soupbone.

Do not declare your foreign purchases when returning from abroad. It isn't done in the best circles. Besides, no one would believe you bought anything if you were not arrested for smuggling.

Do not attend the horse show unless you can be a bigger show than the equines and at least as much of one as the exhibits who occupy the boxes.

When you are all in, go to Europe and rest up. When your husband is all in, go to Reno and split up. When your friends are all out, go calling.

THE REAL "Q"

By Maverick Terrell and H. O. Stechhan

CHARACTERS

DOCTOR (a young man, of striking appearance, prematurely gray, clean shaven, cool, collected and of deliberate manner; wears evening clothes; although not "thoroughly at home," carries the part through successfully).

DETECTIVE (typifying the police officer of heavy build; wears loud clothing and horseshoe mustache; is self-opinionated and brusque).

THIEF (a boyish-looking fellow of about thirty years, with lines of heavy dissipation in the face; poorly clad, though fairly neat).

TIME: The present.

PLACE: Office of Dr. Browder Cornish, specialist in nervous diseases, New York City.

SCENE—Main room of the suite. The entrance door from the street is in the center. There are windows on both sides of the door. A door at the left leads to another room. There is a desk covered with the usual paraphernalia, including an emergency case and a small surgical bag. Back of the desk is a case of surgical instruments. At the right stands a screen, facing up stage, so that a person behind it can be seen by the audience. There are an operating table, several chairs and bookcases.

The room is dark. The silhouette of a man wearing an opera hat is seen passing the left window, and two rings of the doorbell are heard. There is a quick fumbling at the lock and a man lets himself in. He makes a quick survey and passes into the adjoining room. His actions are such as to leave the audience in doubt whether he belongs there or not. A light is turned on in the second room. Someone is seen to pass the right window and there is a faint ring of the doorbell. The light in the adjoining room is extinguished at once. As the bell rings again, the man steps from the adjoining room and looks out cautiously to see who is there. There is a third ring, this time very determined. The man at the window steps back, turns on the lights in the main room and goes to the front door. He opens the door with assurance.

DETECTIVE
(pausing on the threshold, as if surprised)
Dr. Cornish?

DOCTOR
(in an easy manner)
Yes, I am the Doctor.

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THE SMART SET

DETECTIVE

I thought you were in Boston. The afternoon papers said you were going to give an address there tonight.

DOCTOR

A mistake; I go tomorrow. Step in. What can I do for you?

DETECTIVE

Well, I'm glad I found you, Doc. *(He stands awkwardly.)*

DOCTOR

Yes?

DETECTIVE

My name's McCreedy, from the Central Office.

DOCTOR *(eying him sharply)*

Central Office?

DETECTIVE

Yes. To get down to business, Doc—you've heard of this fellow, "Mr. Q."

DOCTOR

Well, what of it?

DETECTIVE

He's the bird that's been robbing all the doctor shops; the papers have been full of it for the last month.

DOCTOR

How does that concern me?

DETECTIVE

Well, we Central Office men have been camping on his trail pretty close. And the scent is growing warm.

DOCTOR *(sneeringly)*

You didn't expect to find him here!

DETECTIVE

Just what I was leading up to, Doc. I've got a "stool" that's wise to this "Mr. Q"—

DOCTOR

A "stool"?

DETECTIVE

Sure, a fellow that tipped me off that "Q" is going to frisk your place some night soon.

DOCTOR *(as if interested)*
Coming here, eh?

DETECTIVE

Well, the papers said you'd be out of town tonight, so I just thought I'd hang around outside and nab him if he shows up.

DOCTOR

But you rang the bell.

DETECTIVE

Sure—I wanted to make sure you weren't in. And now that I've found you—maybe we can fix up a plan to trap him together.

DOCTOR

I don't see how this office—my modest office—can interest such a thief.

DETECTIVE *(looking around)*

Huh, nothing modest in them instruments and—er—that new bag. Must be five hundred dollars' worth, anyway.

DOCTOR

Nearer a thousand, I should say. *(With growing amusement.)* So that's what this "Mr. Q" is after?

DETECTIVE

Betcher life—he knows what this sort of junk's worth. Robbed a hundred doctor offices in town already, and ain't been caught yet.

DOCTOR

Well, Mr. McCreedy, as you're not certain this "Mr. Q" will turn up tonight, and, as I'm in town, you might just as well call it off.

DETECTIVE

But, Doc—

DOCTOR *(insistently)*

That's all right; I can 'phone in to headquarters if anything suspicious happens. Then tomorrow, *after I'm gone*, you can keep an eye on the place—if you haven't caught your "Q" yet.

DETECTIVE

It's orders, Doc; I've got to stay down

here anyway on the lookout. Kind o' feel it in my marrow he's going to show; and if you don't mind, Doc, I'll just stick around in your office.

DOCTOR

But I want to lock up; I'm going to the theater.

DETECTIVE

That's all right—go ahead; don't mind me. But I want to catch this lad with the goods.

DOCTOR (*changing front*)

Well, Mr. McCreedy, if you're that certain he'll turn up tonight, I might just as well remain and see it through.

DETECTIVE (*not wholly satisfied*)

There's a chance, though, Doc, with you here and the lights on, the fellow won't come in.

DOCTOR (*scanning him keenly, as it becomes evident they are fencing for time*) But you said you had a plan by which we might trap him—together.

DETECTIVE

Yes. Say, Doc, that fellow's a slick one, and he's got several ways of making his game. If he comes tonight and sees you here, he may ring in as a patient—and then probably walk off with your watch and your money.

DOCTOR

Well!

DETECTIVE

He made old Dr. Kirk think he was a consumptive—and then came back the same night and stole all his instruments.

DOCTOR

Pretty clever chap, this "Mr. Q." And you think he's coming here tonight?

DETECTIVE

If he travels on schedule.

DOCTOR

This promises to be interesting. (*Turning suddenly on the other.*) What's your plan, McCreedy?

DETECTIVE

Now, mind you, I'm not guaranteeing he'll turn up; but if he does, you let him go through with his game. I'll just hide behind this screen and pinch him before he leaves.

DOCTOR

Well, he can't take anything while I'm here. (*With grim humor.*) You can't arrest him for consulting me.

DETECTIVE

Can't, eh? Say, Doc, here's a roll of bills I marked. Got a watch?

DOCTOR

Yes, and a good one.

DETECTIVE

Fine—slip this roll in your vest pocket, alongside the watch. (*He hands currency to the DOCTOR, who obeys instructions.*) If he gets close, let him take both. It's evidence I want.

DOCTOR

You've aroused my curiosity. I should like to diagnose this "Mr. Q's" case.

DETECTIVE

Of course we do make mistakes sometimes; and he may not show up.

DOCTOR

Well, no one expects a Central Office man to be infallible. I'll wait—a half-hour, anyway.

DETECTIVE

If I can catch him with the goods, it means a lot to me.

DOCTOR

How am I to know this cute "Mr. Q"? Someone else might drop in.

DETECTIVE

Easy enough. He's a smooth-faced young fellow, kind o' thin and light-haired—a pretty hard-looking customer.

DOCTOR (*with a smile*)

Oh, then you've seen him?

THE SMART SET

DETECTIVE

No—description's from the police reports at the office.

(During this speech, the THIEF is seen peeping through the window, at the left first and then at the right.)

DOCTOR

What assurance have I, Mr. Mc-Creedy, that you'll get this man, if I let him take my watch?

DETECTIVE

Don't worry, Doc—I'll nail him. You just let him have his say. He'll never get away from me. *(There is a timorous ring of the doorbell. The DETECTIVE strikes a pose as if to caution silence. The DOCTOR smiles.)* Sh-h-h—maybe that's him! *(The DETECTIVE jumps behind the screen, as there is a second ring of the bell, and motions to the DOCTOR to open the door.)*

DOCTOR *(calling to the person outside)*

All right! *(He opens the door, disclosing the THIEF, who pauses on the threshold.)* Well?

THIEF *(nervously)*

You're—er—the doctor?

DOCTOR

Yes, come in. *(The THIEF obeys; the DOCTOR shuts the door.)* Now, what can I do for you?

THIEF

I just had to see you, Doctor—my nerves are all shot to pieces.

DOCTOR

My office hours are from ten to one. If you'll come in tomorrow morning—

THIEF *(piteously)*

I can't wait—I'm in an awful condition, Doctor. I must have some relief right away. Oh, I don't know what to do!

(The DETECTIVE, looking from behind the screen, signals to the DOCTOR, as if to say: "That's the man; don't let him go.")

DOCTOR *(seating himself at the desk)*

Well, sit down. I'll see if I can't do

something for you now; and then tomorrow I'll look you over thoroughly.

THIEF *(taking a chair)*

Something's wrong in my head, Doctor. If I'm not crazy, already, I'll soon be. I don't know what I'm saying half the time.

DOCTOR

Of course, you know, Mr.—er—

THIEF

Mullen—Robert Mullen.

DOCTOR

You know my time is valuable, and my charges for consultation are fixed.

THIEF

That's all right, Doctor. *(Takes a bill from his pocket.)* Here's ten dollars on account; but for God's sake, Doctor, give me something to take this edge off. I can't stand it any longer. I'm afraid of myself.

DOCTOR

Keep your head, Mullen. Don't be a baby, even if you have a case of nerves.

THIEF

I know I'm acting like a baby; but, great heavens, Doctor, you don't know what I'm going through this very minute! *(Jumping up wildly.)* Why, I'm about to lose my mind! You don't know how sick I am! I'm liable to fall dead any—

(He drops into the chair in a spasm. In the meantime, the DOCTOR has dissolved some medicine in a glass of water, and now gives it to the THIEF. The DETECTIVE watches the whole performance with much interest.)

DOCTOR

Here, brace up—cut out this hysteria. You're not a woman. Take this—it'll quiet you in a minute or so.

(The THIEF pretends to sip from the glass, but pours the contents into the cuspidor as soon as the DOCTOR turns his back to go to the medicine case.)

THIEF *(making a wry mouth)*

This stuff won't hurt me, will it, Doctor?

DOCTOR (*laughing*)

No—just settle you, that's all. Don't you feel better now?

THIEF

Yes; the pain in my head's not so bad. (*Yawns widely.*) I feel sleepy.

DOCTOR

Probably you will be drowsy for a while; and the medicine may make you feel queer. That's its effect, at first.

THIEF (*as if falling asleep*)

'S that so?

DOCTOR

How long have you been in this condition, Mr. Mullen?

THIEF (*coming to with a start*)

Why—er—about a month.

DOCTOR

Only a month? I thought you'd been sick a long time.

THIEF

Well, I have. I'm police reporter on the *Evening Call*, and I guess I've been burning the candle at both ends.

DOCTOR

H'm—you ought to know better. Opium's bad stuff—to smoke.

THIEF

Who said I smoked opium?

DOCTOR

Oh, I misunderstood you. Then you've been working too hard?

THIEF

Yes—I've been trying to run down this mysterious "Mr. Q" that's got the whole town turned inside out.

DOCTOR (*with interest*)

So you're looking for "Mr. Q," too. No wonder your nerves are bad.

THIEF

I've followed him until my tongue's fairly trailing. Why, I've chased him through a hundred doctors' offices.

DOCTOR

You're not looking for him here?

THIEF

Not yet, Doctor—I came to see *you* about my nerves. But you don't know, he may be snooping around here any minute.

DOCTOR

So chasing after "Q" has got you in this fix?

THIEF

Yes; for the last two weeks I haven't been able to sleep a wink. And worse than that, I have these awful suicidal spells.

DOCTOR (*with mock horror*)

What, want to kill yourself?

THIEF

Yes, I want to jump out of the window every time they come over me.

DOCTOR

Well, you haven't jumped yet!

THIEF

Not yet; but I'm afraid I'll have to; if I don't get well I'll lose my job, and then I'll have to jump—somewhere.

DOCTOR

Those spells, Mr. Mullen, are due—in cases of your kind—to an overcharged condition of the cells in the medulla oblongata. A sudden rushing of the blood to the brain produces these vagaries of the mind. Now, what you should do is to keep a couple of cold water bags handy, in your desk; cold water applied to the feet—in bags—is the latest treatment for acute neurasthenia.

THIEF

Not as bad as that, Doctor?

DOCTOR

Well, you're suffering from auto-intoxication.

THIEF

No, no—honest, Doctor, never been on a joy ride.

THE SMART SET

DOCTOR

There, there, Mr. Mullen—nothing radically wrong with you—just over-worked. Your nerves are slightly tangled.

THIEF

Well, I've been chasing this "Q" so long—like a dog after his own tail—that I sometimes think I'm "Q"—myself. Just before coming here I looked through the window and saw all these bright, shiny things—(*Pointing to the instruments*)—and my nerves fairly twitched for them. Doctor, do you believe in dual personality? You don't think I really could be "Mr. Q" and not know it?

DOCTOR

No, Mullen, I'm quite sure the real "Q" is very much awake.

THIEF (*absently*)

Mullen—who's he? (*Looking around wildly.*) Who're you talking to, Doctor?

DOCTOR (*mixing some medicine in a glass*)

There, there, my boy, you'd better have a little more of this sedative. (*Comes around and hands him the glass.*)

THIEF

Do I have to drink this?

DOCTOR

Yes, right down; you need it. (*The THIEF drinks with great effort.*) I don't think it'll kill you. Stand up; I want to listen to your heart. (*The THIEF obeys; the DOCTOR bends over him, and as he does so the THIEF dexterously takes the DOCTOR's watch and money from his vest pocket in plain view of the audience.*)

THIEF

Feels pretty weak, Doctor.

DOCTOR

Your heart's all right, Mr. Mullen. Better go home, now; get to bed and—forget this "Mr. Q."

THIEF

All right, Doctor. (*Rises and starts up stage.*) I'll be down to see you again in the morning.

(*The DETECTIVE jumps from behind the screen and dramatically covers the THIEF with a revolver.*)

DETECTIVE

Well, I guess not, "Mr. Q"! If there's any seeing to be done tomorrow—the Doc'll have to see you at the Tombs.

DOCTOR (*to the THIEF, with mock compassion*)

You'll get—er—a rest tonight.

DETECTIVE

That's once you played the game too often, my boy. (*Lapsing into lingo.*) Out wid de mits.

THIEF (*as the irons are slipped on his wrists*)

Here; you can't arrest me!

DETECTIVE

Can't, eh? Huh, I guess I know you all right—"Mr. Q."

THIEF (*struggling to get away*)

Look-a here—I'm not "Q." I'm Mullen, of the Call.

DETECTIVE (*sneering*)

Tell that to the Chief. Cut out this rough stuff, or I'll fix you for fair. I'll just hand you one for luck, anyway.

DOCTOR

Don't—don't hit him, Mr. McCreedy.

DETECTIVE

Say, Doc, this ain't no Humane Society business. We been layin' for this fellow for a month. Guess I'd better get him caged right away. Best haul I've made since I been at the office.

DOCTOR

Just a minute, Mr. McCreedy! (*Feels of his vest pockets.*) How about my watch this fellow took?

DETECTIVE

You can get it from the Chief in the morning. It'll go in with the marked money.

DOCTOR

But I'd rather have it now.

DETECTIVE

'Gainst orders, Doc. Sorry, but it's got to be entered at headquarters for evidence. You can get it all right in the morning.

DOCTOR (annoyed)

It'll be hard for me to call tomorrow.

DETECTIVE (looking at his own watch and laughing)

Well, Doc, guess you can make your theater yet. You're only ten minutes late now.

DOCTOR

'Well, I've got my seat, so I might as well go to the show, after all.

DETECTIVE

It's a good night's work, Doc. This little bird'll get a nice long rest—for his nerves.

DOCTOR (as the DETECTIVE passes out with the THIEF)

Yes, see that he gets a good place to sleep, McCreedy.

(He carefully closes the door. The DOCTOR stands looking around the room, then steps into the adjoining room and comes back immediately with hat and coat, which he puts on; then he turns out the lights and goes out. Almost immediately the DETECTIVE and the THIEF pick the lock on the front door and enter the room; they snoop around with their electric lanterns for a few moments, then start to take instruments out of the case.)

DETECTIVE (in a whisper laughing)

Say, Jim, as a guy wid de bad nerves, you're a scream. De story you put over on de Doc—where d'ye get it?

THIEF (all traces of affliction gone)

Just made it up as I went along. But say, the Doctor himself seemed sort of dippy.

DETECTIVE

Well, he made you drink de dope—a second time.

THIEF

Yes, and it tasted like bilgewater. Wonder what it's going to do to me?

DETECTIVE

Ah, nothin'—dey never give anything fer de nerves but bread pills and salt powders.

THIEF

Say, Mack, that doctor's got a pair of eyes that eat right through me. Pretty near had me guessing a time or two.

DETECTIVE

Well, he fell fer our game all right; an' he swallowed dat Central Office "con" of mine—fins an' all.

THIEF

Maybe we're not as classy as this "Mr. Q"—whoever he is—but we got away with his game.

DETECTIVE

Aw, there ain't any real "Mr. Q"—it's just some of de boys what's friskin' around town. De newspapers have gone batty.

(The lights are suddenly turned on, revealing the DOCTOR standing in the doorway. He coolly covers the two with a revolver.)

DOCTOR (suavely)

Gentlemen, I hope I don't disturb you.

DETECTIVE

Well, I'll be damned!

THIEF (savagely)

Thought you left the house?

DOCTOR

So I did. You watched me go out; I watched you come in. (With good humor.) I was sure you'd be back, or I wouldn't have let you take my watch.

DETECTIVE (dazed)

Well—how—er—did you get in?

DOCTOR

Through the side door. Sorry to interfere with your professional work, boys, but time is valuable. Would you mind shelling out here on the desk, Mr. Mullen? Come, be quick—my watch! (The THIEF comes forward and obeys sullenly.) And you might just add McCreedy's marked roll. I think that's all you got me for.

DETECTIVE (*as the money is placed on the desk*)

But say, Doc—that roll, that's my money. You ain't going to—

DOCTOR

You bet I am, Mr. McCreedy; and what's more, I'm going to turn you both over to the police. They might need you for evidence.

THIEF (*edging toward the door*)

Well, if we're stung I guess we'll have to take our medicine.

DOCTOR (*indicating with the pistol*)

Just back away from the door—a little over this way, please. Speaking of medicine, Mullen—here's that ten you gave me for consultation. I hope the stuff I gave you helps your nerve. (*Picking up the desk telephone.*) And now for the police. Hello, Central—

(*Getting no response he hangs up the receiver.*) Well, boys, there's no use rubbing it in. You were a little raw in your work and I wanted to give you a lesson—that I hope you won't forget. Now pitch in, get busy and help me carry this junk out. (*Pointing to the instruments.*) My auto's around the corner—and the Doctor may be back any minute.

DETECTIVE (*amazed*)

The Doctor?

DOCTOR (*weariedly*)

Yes, old Browder Cornish.

THIEF

Then who in hell are you?

DOCTOR (*stepping out of the door with an armload of loot*)

Me? Oh, I'm "Q"—the real "Q."

CURTAIN



MY DREAMS

By Edna Valentine Trapnell

LITTLE lonely dreams that came
Long and long ago,
Dreams of gold, success and fame
Coming years would show—
Would I had you back once more,
Dreams I used to know.

What to me the many lands
That I call my own;
That for me gold's magic wands
Wave my wish alone?
All my dreams are realized
But—my dreams are flown.



IT looks as though aeroplanes would be the chief end of man.

A QUESTION OF DUTY

By Marion Ashworth

"THERE is nothing so overrated as a sense of humor—especially in a husband," said the Blonde Lady in an injured voice.

She appealed to the row of large and stout ladies who were sitting with icebags on their foreheads and cold cream on their noses. The secrets of the Turkish bath make women perspire mentally as well as physically. Now, as the Blonde Lady paused and sighed reminiscently, the Dark Lady on her right sipped her hot water in sympathetic silence.

"My poor husband had none at all," she said after a pause; "but then he was a chronic dyspeptic, and he had nervous prostration three times."

The Blonde Lady had heard the Dark Lady's sad story of wife and widowhood before, so now she hurried on.

"My husband has such rigid ideas of honor and all that sort of thing. That's all right—for him, if he would only let me alone. I always pay my bills eventually; but I hate to be worried—and I never *could* see anything dishonest in smuggling."

"If you *can* smuggle," said the Dark Lady darkly.

"I always did, until—well, that's my story."

The Blonde Lady sighed again, and the row of stout ladies looked politely interested.

They had discussed manicures and servants and dressmakers, and conversation was beginning to languish. They already knew a great deal about the Blonde Lady's life, her husband's virtues and failings—he never forgot to tree his boots, for instance, no matter how well he had dined; he was "de-

voted" to apple pie, but it gave him indigestion; he did not approve of women smoking; he had lost money in steel and was making more in cotton. The Blonde Lady was expansive and guileless. She had no children, but her "poems" had taken several prizes; it was only owing to jealousy that first prizes had been denied her.

"Bribery is no good any more," said the Dark Lady sadly.

"It wasn't a case of bribery; it was my husband's idea of being funny that ruined me," said the Blonde Lady indignantly. She settled down comfortably and wrapped her bathsheet about her with a tragic gesture.

"We had been abroad all summer," she began leisurely. "Henry had taken the cure at Marienbad, and it had never stopped raining. I hate German food, too—it's so fattening; and there was nothing else to do but to eat."

"Didn't you take the cure?" asked the Dark Lady reproachfully.

"Certainly not. I wasn't ill; I was just bored."

"I always took the cure everywhere with my poor husband; he took them all, too—at home and abroad. I always think it's so much more sympathetic; besides, one never knows—and it does no harm, so why not take it when one has the chance?"

"I never could stand the dieting. It seems to me that doctors cross-question until they find out everything you like—and then they won't ever let you have that; and whatever you hate turns out to be your regular diet three times a day."

The Blonde Lady got so excited on this subject that it was only with diffi-

culty that she could be persuaded to return to her subject.

"When we got to Paris we didn't have much time to stop for clothes, but I wanted to get something, of course. You simply cannot come back from Paris without buying *some* clothes. Your friends would be sure to say your husband was going to fail. I wanted to get lace most of all—my dressmaker here told me to bring back all I could—and I had seen the most heavenly tunic of *point de Flandre*. It was a lot of money, and I had spent all mine; so I tried to persuade Henry to buy it for me as a Christmas present. I knew if he gave me a Christmas present in August I was sure to get another in December—Henry couldn't be so mean as to take advantage of me in that—but I could not move him. He was so terrified of the customs. Besides, he wasn't very good-tempered. Marienbad hadn't done him much good and he wanted to get home. Real lace to him didn't mean anything; he doesn't know the difference between cheesecloth and *point de Flandre*. He said, what was the good of paying so much duty, anyway? Besides, Henry believes in buying everything at home and all that rubbish—encouraging home industries he calls it. I said to him:

"But there won't be any duty to pay; there's nothing easier to pack than lace, and I'll get it through."

"Then he got cross. He said:

"Now see here, Mabel, what's the good of making laws if you don't mean to keep them"—as if I made the laws, you know! 'Besides,' he said, 'you're lying and you're cheating and stealing from the government all for a few yards of rotten lace.'

"You know the way men talk on subjects they know nothing about. He said:

"You'll get found out, and I won't have it. I should feel like a criminal myself, and I should get blamed for letting you do such things."

"Oh, no," I said, "I'm sure you wouldn't. The customs men would understand—especially if they are married men."

"I won't be made a fool of!" he roared

then, really excited. 'You buy what you want in America, or you go without it.'

"Well, I saw it was no use arguing, so I said no more; but I sulked a little and looked injured, and then he felt sorry, but all the same he wouldn't budge—I saw that. The next morning, when he went out to see about the tickets and things, I went off on my own hook. I was determined to have that lace. I had a cousin in Paris just then, and after counting up what money I had, I went over to see her at her hotel, and I asked her to lend me two hundred dollars. I thought it wonderful luck that she let me have it, too. I wouldn't tell her about the tunic for fear she would refuse the money and go off and buy it herself. It was a bargain, you know—I still believe that. Well, I tore off and bought it, and about forty or fifty yards of Valenciennes as well. You know how lovely it is for muslin dresses, and what a price it is here! I got back before Henry and hid it away in my cabin trunk, as all the big trunks had gone on to Cherbourg; and there I was when Henry came in. He felt sorry for me, then—you know the way men are when there's been an argument and you've given in, or they think you have. He was all upset. He felt like a brute—I could see that. He said:

"Now I'll buy you something nice in the U. S. A. to make up for the lace. Something that'll make these Pareziens"—Henry's French is too awful—"sit up and take notice when we come back next summer."

"I felt a little guilty, you know, but I never said a word; and I didn't dare get friendly again too soon for fear he would suspect me.

"When we got on board it seemed a kind of fate the way everyone talked customs and duties all the way over. It got to be a mania with Henry. If I joined any group of people, I was sure to hear how someone or other had just been caught, or just escaped, or of some particular monster who overturned trunks in search of dutiable things. I couldn't sleep at night, I worried so; or if I did sleep, I did nothing but dream of mountains of lace, and besides, I was terrified

of *talking* in my sleep. It seemed that wretched bundle of lace had grown every time I looked at it—and heaven knows it had looked small enough when I paid for it! I am sure it grew on the voyage. Everywhere I packed it it seemed too big, and it seemed to start out and jump at me the minute I opened the trunk where it was. I really think I would have chucked it overboard if it hadn't cost so much and if I still hadn't owed money for it. You know, you hear that nothing is so good for banting as worry; well, I *know* it. I simply shed pounds on that trip!

"Well, the day we were to land I had to maneuver to keep Henry out of the stateroom while I decided what to do with it. I was really in a state of nerves by then, but I locked the door on the pretense of packing, and I just wore the tunic under my dress—wound it round and round. It was August, too, so you can imagine how happy and comfortable I was. It took me hours; and when it was done, I was afraid to move for fear it would *unwind*. Dignity was my role for the day. I suffered agonies. Even Henry noticed my lack of appetite at lunch, but I said I was suffering from the heat. So I was! Henry had made his declarations, and he was feeling very snug and respectable and worthy. Besides, he was eating an enormous meal of all the things he had been expressly forbidden at Marienbad. I couldn't stand it.

"Are you sure you haven't some French matches you may have forgotten to declare?" I said, trying to be sarcastic and wanting to cry. You know how rotten French matches are, anyway. But Henry was still terribly serious.

"My dear girl," he said, "you still don't realize what a serious offense it is. Say, for instance, someone asked to *search* you—what would you do then?"

"Oh, nonsense," said I, very cross, but trying to appear casual; "that's all newspaper talk; no one is ever searched—except perhaps dressmakers—and I don't believe that."

"Don't you?" said Henry, and he looked at me curiously, chewing his cigar the way he does when he's thinking

hard. I didn't notice it then, I was so nervous myself; but I only wish I had!

"You know the crowd and confusion there always is at the end of the trip. Well, I still don't know how it happened, but I was standing a little apart, separated from Henry, and I saw him speaking to a perfectly strange man. The man looked over at me and then back at Henry, but Henry nodded; and then that man—an awful-looking person he was, too, with a squint and chewing gum—came straight over to me. He took off his hat and he said:

"I am very sorry, madam, but we have been notified that you have lace that you have not declared. I am afraid we must ask you to step this way."

"My goodness!" said all the stout ladies in chorus.

"I gave one look at Henry, and there he was, with a fiendish grin on his face, thinking he was being so funny and giving me such a good lesson. I couldn't move; I really believe my heart stopped beating."

The Blonde Lady paused. She squeezed a little more cold cream out of her tube and rubbed her nose thoughtfully.

"Well?" said the stout ladies. "And then?" They also said, "Well, I never!" and "Did you ever?" and other exclamations expressive of keen interest and sympathy.

"Well, I *was* searched, that's all; and it was my husband's idea of a joke to inform on me, not knowing, of course, that I *did* have anything. He thought it would be such an excellent way to cure me of smuggling. Well, it *did* cure me, but it also cured him of being funny, for he had to pay the duty. Sixty per cent, I think it was. We didn't speak for a week."

The Dark Lady's hot water had grown cold. "And did you wear the lace?" she asked sweetly.

"Wear it?" repeated the Blonde Lady excitedly. "If I had, I really think Henry would have murdered me. And he's not a violent man. No, I let my cousin have it all for the money I borrowed—and she got a good bargain, too."

HOMESICK

By Nancy Byrd Turner

THE long green country ways are sweet with breath of nodding clover,
And soft with velvet grass and safe beneath a placid sky;
But I'm thinking of an endless lane that frowning roofs lean over,
A lane whose banks crowd close and grim to watch the throngs go by.
I can hear the hum and beat of the many-minded street,
I mark the face of Hope and Pain, the laugh of Youth and Clown,
The wings of Dreams Desired, the step of Age Grown Tired,
The madness and the gladness—and my heart is sick for town.

Here in this peace a cowbell rings across a level meadow,
A robin sings the sunset out beneath a bright'ning star;
But I miss the busy squares that dimmed an hour since to shadow,
And flamed again with myriad gems, a million sown afar.
I want the long white light of the Avenue at night,
The current swinging up to meet the great tide setting down,
The music lifting, swelling, to a multitude's compelling—
And dawn shall find me on the trail; my heart is faint for town.



IF SHE BUT WOULD

By Djuan Chappell Barnes

ONE look a day would make me cold,
Two looks a day would make me bold,
Three looks a day would make me hold
Some hope of winning.

One smile a day would make me yearn,
Two smiles a day would make me burn,
Three smiles a day would make me learn
That love is killing.

One small word would make me still,
Two small words would make me thrill,
Three small words—oh, if she will!
Now guess the ending.

ABUS DE CONFIANCE

Par Pierre Mille

ON n'a peut-être pas assez clairement distingué l'un des motifs jetant à l'anticléricalisme un grand nombre de personnes. C'est que, dans le vocable "libre penseur" il y a "penseur." Professer des opinions contraires à la foi, et nier le surnatural, est donc, d'une façon tout à fait évidente, se donner un brevet d'intellectualité. Voilà pourquoi M. Lefoullot, propriétaire d'un magasin de nouveautés et conseiller municipal à Mouchy-sur-Indre, éprouvait une réelle fierté à se proclamer nettement anticlérical. Certains de ses raisonnements l'éblouissaient lui-même. C'est ainsi qu'il était parvenu à ruiner, jusque dans ses fondements, le dogme de la présence réelle. "Que Dieu, disait-il, se trouve dans une hostie, je le comprends, à la rigueur. Mais qu'on puisse le rencontrer à la fois dans toutes les hosties, à la même heure et dans toutes les parties du monde, c'est ce qu'on ne me fera jamais croire!" Cette puissance d'argumentation lui avait acquis quelque renommée dans sa patrie, particulièrement à ses propres yeux.

Lorsqu'il vint à Paris pour renouveler ses approvisionnements de printemps, après qu'il eut visité ses correspondants, il se trouva qu'il lui restait encore une bonne demi-journée avant de reprendre le train de Mouchy-sur-Indre. Homme timide, prudent, doué d'instincts d'économie, M. Lefoullot se couchait à Paris d'aussi bonne heure qu'en province, afin d'éviter la dépense et les tentations; la haine qu'il avait de toutes les superstitions ne l'empêchait point d'avoir de bonnes mœurs. Aussi s'était-il levé de fort bon matin. Il commença d'errer par les rues, alors qu'on n'y rencontre encore que des employés qui se hâtent vers

leur bureau ou leur magasin, le nez dans leur journal. Le soleil brillait dans un beau ciel pommelé, l'air lavé par les averses de mars était d'une transparence singulière; il faisait bon marcher. Du quartier de la Bourse du Commerce, où se trouvait son hôtel, M. Lefoullot gagna, sans même s'en apercevoir, la ligne des grands boulevards; et ce fut ainsi qu'il aperçut au bout d'une étroite rue transversale, assise sur la colline de Montmartre comme sur un socle, tranquille, solide, radieuse dans l'éclat du jour jeune, la basilique du Sacré-Cœur. M. Lefoullot haussa les épaules d'un air de pitié dédaigneuse, mais décida "d'aller voir."

Quand il eut dépassé Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, il perdit de vue les coupoles rondes et le dôme altier de ce château fort de la foi. Mais il était trop près, désormais, pour se perdre; il gravit allégrement l'âpre côte de la rue des Martyrs, traversa le boulevard extérieur, à la hauteur du collège Rollin, et, par la rue de Steinkerque, atteignit la place Saint-Pierre. Alors la formidable église lui apparut de nouveau. Elle envahit son regard, elle imposa sa domination. Au delà des pentes gazonnées, aveuglant le ciel de sa masse énorme, elle était pourtant comme tassée; il semblait que, si elle l'avait voulu, elle eût pu se lever sur ses jambes de pierre et paraître plus haute encore. Tous les cabarets à chansons, tous les lieux de plaisir, à cette heure, étaient hermétiquement clos. Montmartre n'avait plus son air de frivolité. Au contraire, de bonnes vieilles en mantes à cloche, comme dans la province la plus éloignée, la plus arriérée, montaient les pentes à tout petits pas, un livre de messe à la main; et, par-

tout, l'on vendait de saintes images, des chapelets, des médailles luisantes, prêtes à la bénédiction des officiants. Et c'était dans tout cet espace d'air printanier et de vieilles maisons, au-dessus de Paris à la fois clair et fumeux, un grand silence impitoyablement solennel. M. Lefoullot monta derrière les vieilles. . . .

Au sommet du tertre, plaquée contre une barricade en planches, presque dissimulée, très humble, il distingua une pauvre petite statue, la figure douloureuse d'un homme debout, les mains liées. "Encore une idole!" songea-t-il. Et il allait s'en détourner avec mépris quand une inscription l'informa que c'était le chevalier de la Barre, victime de l'intolérance. Il eût bien voulu alors lui rendre un hommage visible, pratiquer une sorte quelconque de culte, et constata en lui-même que cela lui était impossible, puisqu'il n'y avait que lui de son opinion sur la place, et que le seul culte possible en ces occasions est public, officiel, et consiste en discours prononcés devant une assemblée recrutée tout exprès. Il s'éloigna, découragé.

Un bedeau insinuant lui offrit de visiter la crypte. Il déclina cette offre avec horreur. Quelques instants après, sans doute parce que personne ne le lui demandait, par une sorte de contradiction, il était dans l'église et fut étonné de sentir qu'il avait déjà pris, sans y penser, son chapeau à la main. "On se découvre dans toutes les maisons, se dit-il par manière d'excuse, cela ne prouve rien." La vérité c'est qu'on lui avait inculqué, dès sa toute petite enfance, l'habitude d'ôter son chapeau dans les églises, et que d'ailleurs la hauteur des voûtes, l'immensité de la nef lui imposaient. Sous la coupole centrale, il eut l'impression subite d'être à l'intérieur d'un ballon qui va s'enlever. Il eut envie d'étendre les bras pour se mieux sentir planer. Afin de retrouver son dédain, il s'appliqua patiemment à lire les inscriptions des ex-voto de marbre qui recouvraient les colonnes. Des jeunes gens remerciaient le Sacré-Cœur pour un succès dans leurs examens; des malades lui attribuaient leur guérison; d'autres signalaient seulement "une

grâce particulière." M. Lefoullot se plut à imaginer là des sous-entendus criminels ou hypocrites, la mort d'un mari détesté, l'échéance inattendue d'un héritage douteux. Tout à coup, le grand portail s'ouvrit à deux battants, et, avec l'aveuglante lumière tombée brutalement du beau ciel du sud, ce fut l'irruption, à travers les portiques, d'un chant farouche burlé par deux mille voix. M. Lefoullot eut l'impression physique d'un vent très fort; il aperçut des bannières bleues, des bannières blanches, des oriflammes de soie lumineuse, une croix d'or des hampes d'or. "Sauvez Rome et la France! . . ." L'hymne se précipita sur lui en même temps que deux mille pèlerins fanatiques aux bouches noires, aux yeux clairs, certains d'être chez eux, certains de faire ce qui se devait faire, ivres d'un délire sacré. M. Lefoullot essaya de fuir, de gagner, par un des bas-côtés, une des portes latérales. Le flot humain qui l'épouvantait le prit, l'emporta, le bouscula. Encore quelques instants et il allait être rejeté devant le chœur, il allait prendre part, lui, M. Lefoullot, édile de Mouchy et nettement anticlérical, à des cérémonies idolâtriques, il allait être malgré lui jeté à deux genoux, le front humilié, devant l'autel d'une divinité qu'il ne voulait pas reconnaître: car le moyen de demeurer debout, en protestataire courageux, sans être assommé? Eperdu, M. Lefoullot s'accrochait aux chaises quand il aperçut, entre-bâillée, la porte d'un confessionnal. Il pénétra vivement dans cette espèce de cage hospitalière, trouva un petit banc de bois, s'assit, et referma la porte sur lui.

Alors, il se crut sauvé. Il n'avait qu'à laisser passer le torrent, et, quand tout le monde aurait pris sa place, quand l'attention de tous serait détournée de lui par les épisodes du grand drame religieux qu'on allait célébrer, son évasion silencieuse ne serait plus qu'un jeu. Il souffla longuement, soulagé. . . . Un bruit singulier le fit subitement tressaillir, le bruit d'une jupe qui se froissait légèrement contre les parois de l'un des compartiments du confessionnal, et il entendit, il entrevit très vaguement, à travers le grillage de l'un des guichets, un

chapeau de femme bordé de tulle noir, très discret, très modeste, peut-être un peu ridicule même dans sa médiocrité, et les traits fatigués, effacés, mais honnêtes et purs, d'une petite bourgeoise qui avait certainement dépassé la quarantaine. "Mon père, bénissez-moi. . . ." Une des pèlerines avait eu un remords de conscience, ne s'était pas senti l'âme complètement en paix et venait se confesser!

Et cela lui parut très drôle d'abord, à M. Lefoullot. Il allait savoir les fautes, les bassesses, les vilenies, les chutes peut-être d'une dévote; il allait renforcer, par une expérience définitive et incontestable, la conviction qu'il avait toujours professée "que ces femmes-là, vous savez, ne valent pas mieux que les autres." Celle-là était pressée, elle était accoutumée au sacrement, elle en accomplit les rites préliminaires avec une telle rapidité que M. Lefoullot n'eut qu'à rester muet, sans que son ignorance eût à se dénoncer. Il écouta, et voilà qu'il éprouva tout de suite une espèce d'inquiétude, presque un petit remords; sa pénitente révélait qu'elle exerçait un commerce, un petit commerce très pareil au sien, à celui de sa femme! Elle lui devint plus proche, il lui sembla qu'il violait, non plus le secret de la confession, dont il n'avait pas souci, mais le secret professionnel. Et comme c'était ennuyeux de savoir ces histoires qu'il ne devait pas savoir! Une fois, cette dame avait servi un client le dimanche. La belle affaire! Elle avait "rafratchi" à la benzine un stock de gants marqués aux plis. Tout le monde en fait autant. Elle se reprochait sa paresse dans l'exercice de sa profession, ses impatiences à l'égard de son mari.

Mais quelle brave femme, vraiment! M. Lefoullot avait presque envie de l'embrasser. Et la confession se déroula ainsi, aveux émouvants à force d'innocence, à force d'insignifiance, aveux d'une pauvre et noble petite bourgeoise vieillie courageusement dans son effort quotidien à faire son devoir envers les siens, envers les hommes, envers une toute-puissance qu'elle révérait naïvement, sans un doute, depuis son enfance. M. Lefoullot gronda intérieurement:

— Que diable est-ce que je f. . . . ici?

Il était embêté comme jamais il ne l'avait été de sa vie; il trépidait, il se jugeait, car c'était un brave homme, parfaitement indélicat. Et, à la fin, il n'eut plus qu'une idée: s'en aller! S'en aller n'importe comment! S'en aller à tout prix.

— . . . Mon père, je m'accuse d'avoir, un jour, regardé immodestement un de nos voisins qui . . .

Ah, non! M. Lefoullot ne pouvait supporter un mot de plus! Il prononça d'une voix forte, — un peu trop forte pour sa situation:

— Je ne puis pas vous entendre, madame, véritablement, je ne puis pas, je ne veux pas vous entendre! Adressez-vous à un autre!

Et, rouvrant la porte du confessionnal, il s'enfuit comme s'il avait eu, dans cette église, le diable à ses trousses.

Mais la pénitente se demande encore pourquoi on n'a pas voulu lui donner l'absolution ce jour-là. Soucieuse, elle est revenue depuis bien des fois à cette basilique de Montmartre: personne n'a pu lui donner le nom de ce confesseur si sévère.



UNE sensation d'art est une sensation par répercussion, tandis qu'une sensation d'amour est ce qui atteint l'essence même de l'être. L'écho est toujours plus faible que le cri original.

PRETTY PEGGY

By Gordon Johnstone

WHEN Peggy goes a-marketing,
Demure and prim and neat,
I would I were the dusty road
To sing beneath her feet;
I would I were the basket on
Her soft brown dimpled arm,
Then life would be a market day
Unending in its charm.

When Peggy trips the minuet
With any gallant beau,
Her dainty feet flash in and out
Like satin stars that glow;
Her laughter weaves the sweetest rune
That ever lone heart heard,
The murmur of a brook that wakes
The love note of a bird.

When Peggy treads her way to church
My heart must follow, too.
And wish it were those violets
Misnamed "her eyes of blue,"
And wish it were the book of prayer
That smiles up in her face,
'Twould ask no fairer heav'n above
Nor truer meed of grace.

Sweet Peggy, life's a queer old chap
Who must delight in pain
To drop your glances in my heart
Like pearls of silver rain,
To weave a white and gold romance
Of dreams that fade away,
For you have slept a hundred years
And I'm a-song today.



HE loves best who loves last.

TRYING IT ON THE DOG DAYS

By George Jean Nathan

I AM writing this in the bathtub. The beauteous Cavaliere is singing softly, sweetly, insinuatingly to me (from out a phonograph on my right) and a stupendous mint julep is flirting openly with me on my left. My body, already bronzed by indolent Atlantic suns, is stretched at its cool, suave ease in gallons of soothing Croton. My retreat is sheltered in the fairy twilight imparted by soft window curtains of sensitive gray. Down below, in the asphalt belly of the seething city, newsboys are crying of scores who have been prostrated by the ceaseless heat. But I only laugh back in heartless answer.

To understand the value, the joy, the sheer ecstasy of one's own city bathtub, it is only necessary for one to have experienced the contagious summer disease known as seashore. After an intimate and protracted study of the numerous native beach resorts, I have arrived at the conclusion that my unde-filed, private and secluded tub is as superior to Newport as Newport is to Coney Island, and as superior to Coney Island as the latter is to Atlantic City. When one attempts to bathe in the surf, it is a toss-up as to whether or not one will finally emanate from the water with a mouthful of migratory cantaloupe, lemon peelings, hairpins, garters, water-melon rinds, Diamond dyes or something proportionately invigorating. And in addition to this ingratiating anticipation, there is the constant esthetic disturbance being caused in one's immediate vicinity by ungainly females who pain the eye with cotton-stockinged knock-knees and by strutting, indoor-lived males whose necks reveal a lingering yellow collar line and whose throats

are stained with unsightly, greenish collar button spots. The bathtub is free from all such evils. It is restful, aristocratic and inspiring. And for this reason it is a well nigh perfect haven for any critic who is called upon by duty to maintain a cool mind, so that he may present his opinions of the drama that is tried on the dog days for the benefit of his opulent and enviable vacationing readers who are paying a couple of hundred dollars a week for the privilege of being bitten by mosquitoes, wearing evening clothes in sweaty dining rooms presided over by perspiring negroes, drinking the sort of cocktails that are poured out of bottles, listening to an orchestra composed of union musicians, lying around a beach filled with broken glass and cracked reputations, and talking to the hotel clerk.

From my bathtub, then, ladies and gentlemen, I greet you! And from this same exclusive, liquid monastery I shall tell you of "MRS. AVERY," one of the first of the new plays to have dared the thermometer. I saw "MRS. AVERY" in Atlantic City. Let me justify myself quickly, however. A storm drove our yacht willy-nilly into Atlantic City, and Atlantic City, in turn, drove me into "MRS. AVERY." I did not want to go to the theater, because I was on a holiday; but anything is better than Atlantic City. Anything, that is, but "MRS. AVERY." For, as even a professional scholar must have suspected by this time, "MRS. AVERY" may not, in the strict sense of the word, be called a classic. The play is the joint labor of Miss Gretchen Dale and Howard Estabrook, dramatists hitherto unknown to this tub, and is presented by a company

that includes Charles J. Ross, Brandon Hurst, Miss Carlotta Nillson and George Probert.

Now ordinarily I am not a particularly dense individual. On week days I am able to understand the average joke without a diagram, whether it be from the pages of *Puck*, *Punch*, *Fliegende Blätter*, *Le Rire*, Professor Münsterberg's perfectly serious text books on what that gentleman is pleased to blanket as psychology, Mr. Roosevelt's press sheet on African elephant hunting or any other humorous publication. I am able to comprehend the average drama without supremely arduous mental toil. Indeed, I have it to my proud credit that I once even figured out what a play written by Louis K. Anspacher was about! But here at last is a case that has baffled me. I am sorry, for it is only my second offense in this respect in six times that number of years. Three seasons ago my powers of deduction failed me in the instance of a presentation by Messrs. Viereck and Woolf called "The Vampire"—and now again "Mrs. AVERY" has put me to shame.

For irritating conflict in themes, this latter dramatic exhibit surpasses the "original" composition of an Asbury Park band leader. At eight forty-five it appears that the play is to be a protest against marrying for love without careful forethought as to the desirability and vital necessity of definite finances for future use. At nine o'clock it seems that one has been sadly in error, for the play now appears to direct itself at the crookedness in modern business enterprises. At nine thirty-seven one makes up his mind that the play is somewhat more difficult of deciphering than a massage cream prize puzzle offer, as it is now inferred that the theme of the exhibit, as spoken by one of the characters, is: "No woman can accept money from a man without having to give something in return some day." But, hark; it is ten o'clock; one must not count one's themes before they are hatched. It dawns that the central idea of the play must be concerning itself with the question of the proportion of sacrifice a wife should make for her husband. Alas,

however, how time flies! At ten thirty the thesis seems to have reversed engines and is having a great to-do with a poor wife's struggle against the Lorelei of luxury to which she once was accustomed. And at quarter to eleven one cannot be entirely sure whether one did not have too many beers during dinner.

As a result of all this confusion, an evening with "Mrs. AVERY" befuddles the brain quite as effectively as would the same amount of time spent in Old Vienna, the Berkeley or one of the other Boardwalk establishments where "life" may be seen at thirty cents a highball—the more highballs, the more "life." The action of the play under discussion transpires in the Averys' apartments in Manhattan. The effort must be set down as an amateurish daub, devoid of balance and bereft of any clear evidences of definite ideas of dramatic construction. Mr. Ross's performance of the role of the foreign financier who sets his purse to catch young Avery's wife, however, deserves its word of praise. And now let us hasten back to New York.

To speak of Ziegfeld "FOLLIES" under the head of drama would be akin to listing the writings of Louisa M. Alcott under the head of literature, the mayors of Philadelphia, Boston and New York under the head of art connoisseurs, crème de menthe under the head of stimulants or Corse Payton under the head of actors. To attempt to offer a "criticism" of these same "FOLLIES" would be as foolhardy and footless an undertaking as would be the effort to convince golf and bridge whist enthusiasts of the mistake they are making in life. The "FOLLIES," like street parades, automobile shows and your wife's gowns, may be reviewed in the casual sense, but "criticized"—never. The fact that I, for instance, who entertain a biased, though transcendental, preference for ladies of the blonde cult, may personally deplore the presence of an overbalancing supply of brunette belles in the current offering, certainly gives me no just critical right to direct my pen at what seems to me to be such a grievous flaw in this year's exhibit. Nor may I, who have found that some of the

transpirings on the stage interfere seriously with the work of the waiters, hold such an error against the presentation as a whole, however large it may loom in my own eyes. The "FOLLIES" are neither strict vaudeville nor moving pictures, neither burlesque nor drama, neither grand opera nor musical comedy, neither trout, steak, capon nor good Bismarck herring. Like female impersonators and those funny little red crabs that come in oyster stews, they defy a definite cataloguing. But, viewed as they are meant to be reviewed, these entertainments rarely fail to achieve what has been expected of them. They have become an institution of summery New York, as much a part of mercury tormenting Manhattan as the Lew Fields musical spectacles have become a part of Broadway's snow days.

The "FOLLIES" recipe is rarely altered. Song—drop a curtain—eccentric dance—raise a curtain—Lillian Lorraine—drop a curtain—tramp and German comedians—raise a curtain—near-naughty dance—drop a curtain—Bert Williams's singing monologue—raise a curtain—some "Gibson" or "Brinkley" girls—drop a curtain—with skirts raised all the time when they are not dropped altogether—and there you have the "Follies of 1908 to 1911 and beyond" inclusive! And yet, despite the obviousness of the whole thing, despite the fact that one usually knows accurately just what is coming next, the "FOLLIES" remain regularly and thoroughly attractive because of their paradoxical spontaneity, the very dramatic excellence of female face and figure which they consistently reveal and—the waiters.

The language of the "FOLLIES OF 1911" is credited to George V. Hobart and the noise that the orchestra periodically makes to Messrs. Levi and Hubbell. The added presence of Miss Bessie McCoy assists considerably in the pleasure of the evening this summer, as does also the introduction of a lone genuine novelty in the form of a comparatively legitimate travesty of Walter Browne's modern morality play "Everywoman." The offering is called "Everywife," and

in all fairness may be said to match, if not excel, the original not only in its underlying dramatic idea but in the good judgment displayed in the balance of seriousness and humor as well. The story of "Everywife"—a more clearly valid one than that employed by the late supersymbolical Mr. Browne—concerns Everywife and Everyhusband, who, after a few months of wedded life, are found living in their cozy little flat with Happiness, a pretty girl in pink, as their servant. Everyhusband is so much in love with his wife that he is prone to neglect his serious business duties. Reason insinuates that he is doing wrong, but Rhyme, personified by a clownish coxcomb, slaps him across the back and tells him not to heed Reason. Soon Jealousy, the woman in green, comes between Everyhusband and his wife, and the latter, a bit suspicious of her spouse, begins to cry. Everyhusband is urged by Reason to tell his wife the truth inasmuch as he is innocent of wrongdoing, but Rhyme insists that Everyhusband fib about the other woman. And Everyhusband tells Everywife that the woman was only his cousin, whom he had "not seen in a long while." Everywife knows better; there is an argument; Happiness hands in her notice and says she will seek a new place, and Everyhusband bangs his way out of the house.

We next discover Everyhusband at the stage door. A month has passed; he has refused to listen to Reason, and he is determined to forget Everywife amid the white lights of Broadway. He has made the acquaintance of many chorus girls, among them Dress, Excitement, Gaiety, Grace, Amusement, and Loveliness, but of them all he is bent alone on pursuing a fast little minx named Squabina. He approaches Squabina and asks her to have supper and a few other things with him. Reason implores him to remember Everywife, but he thrusts the intruder from him. The girl, however, feels the presence of Reason and tells Everyhusband to go home. "I ain't goin' to wake up in the morning and stumble over anybody's reputation," says she. (I feel compelled to intrude

myself at this juncture and remind the reader that this is not in the least supposed to be true to life. Mr. Hobart did not intend it to be and it certainly is not. At this point in the travesty, the author admits that he has purposely caused the symbols to clash.) At any rate, after several more months have elapsed—for what dramatic purpose you shall presently see—we find Every-husband hanging around his club with keen-eyed Gamble and red-nosed Drink. He is rapidly going the pace when Reason gets the better of him, shows him what a fool he has been making of himself and persuades him to ask Every-wife's forgiveness. And so at last we see Everyhusband and his wife reunited; Everywife presents her husband with a cute little dramatic purpose weighing seven pounds, and Happiness returns to her post. "And who," inquires Reason, "will remember any of the unpleasant things that have happened?" "Nobody!" exclaims black Bert Williams, who enacts the role bearing the abstract name, as he pokes his head over a screen near the fireplace. The unaffectedness, natural humor and pleasant satire of the little offering are quite compelling. It is not of profound consequence, to be sure, but it is hugely enjoyable.

The most widely advertised feature of this season's show is called "New Year's Eve on the Barbary Coast," and, not unlike so many other widely advertised alleged theatrical "sensations," is as tame as a society tea, a Bostock wild animal, or a novel by Mrs. Humphry Ward. The Barbary Coast, as the reader probably knows, is that gentle section of San Francisco where you may get anything from a shave to a haircut in a dance hall unless you exercise extreme caution in winking at her only when the fellow who is paying for her beer has gone out to the bar, and where your diamond scarfpin is just about as safe as it would be in Wall Street or Buffalo politics. It was announced that in this scene there would be reproduced a dance indigenous to the soil that would make the Moulin Rouge Wriggle, the Rat Mort Rib Buster, the Apache Appendix Damager and all the

other abdominal schottisches look like a New England barn dance. Excitement ran high among the lovers of the drama whose wives had gone to the country—and then they pulled up the curtain! The terpsichorean *chef d'œuvre* was labeled the "Texas Tommy," and was executed by Miss Lorraine and two of the male help. It proved to consist of nothing more than a few innocent wiggings of the hips and shoulders to the accompaniment of hysterical music by the orchestra and yells and screeches, presumably indicative of intoxicated, delirious revelry, by the chorus. The "FOLLIES," this season, are nothing if not moral. It is to be hoped that the management will not view this comment in the light of unfavorable criticism.

While our pen is busied with the subject of dances, it may as well be said that the "RUSSIAN BALLETS," presented at the Winter Garden, might actually have substantiated their advertised claim to sensationalism—and legitimate, artistic sensationalism, too—had it not been for the ignorance, folly or uncomfortable physical temperature of a player from the American vaudeville who sponsored and invited herself to assume the leading part in the presentations. Picture to yourself a comic supplement cartoonist from the Hammerstein roof giving an exhibition of his craft in the Louvre. Picture to yourself a Casino show girl acting as a partner in the dance to a Rita Sacchetto. Picture to yourself a Keith and Proctor quartet tenor wrestling with "Aida." Picture to yourself any of these and you will gain a competent idea of the indecent bravado of Miss Gertrude Hoffmann, who injected her unclothed body and ante-vitagraph "art" into the sacred, definite, authentic and most exalted art of the most picturesque nation in the world. Thus what might have been, and what to a large extent could not help but remain, a mightily wrought carnival of interpretive dancing was for the moment prostituted by the pitiable error of a single performer into a frank play to carnal curiosity, to bald-headed smirking and winks and to the species of sensation that is sought by visiting drummers, bartenders and Phil-

adelprians in those regions of the metropolis where the door is caught by a chain, where the blinds are kept down and where a police officer is stationed on every block. The critics united their voices in protest at the sacrilege and, happy to tell, time brought with it a correction of the blunder.

The saddest offense in connection with the BALLETS, however, is to be laid at the door of the Mayor of New York, who, without knowing whereof he spoke inasmuch as he had not seen fit to attend the performance, charged the *entire* exhibition with the condemnatory adjective "lewd." This official, with a municipal politician's usual unfamiliarity with anything beyond dock contracts, police department secrets and the affairs of the Comptroller's office, had heard a stray report of the dances, and, like the prim American spinster who was shocked every time anybody spoke French in her presence, believing that there could be nothing in that language that was not *risqué*, issued an order for "the taking of physical possession of the stage and the arrest of all those engaged in the indecencies which it exhibits." The Russian dancers protested against the general insult that had been thus offered them, and a magistrate, before whom the issue was presented, subsequently displayed his good, clean, sound, unstained-by-politics sense by indicating in vivid verbalism that the Mayor had committed the comparatively mistaken generality of calling all blondes fast, all Chicago a stockyard and all truth-telling writers muckrakers.

Had the Mayor followed the critics in issuing a manifesto against the American intruder in the ballets alone, he might have been praised. Nudity as disclosed by the interloper in question was not the nudity of art, but rather the nudity of the midway sideshow "for gents only." If such nakedness be art, then the Congo Free State is to be proclaimed the art center of the earth. There is nudity and there is nudity. And there is discrimination between the two even among the unlettered denizens of the dark alleys. A Botticelli may be hung with respect in a low beer saloon

where only a moment before a postcard from the Gallic boulevards was hailed with shouts of animal glee.

The ballets proper were three in number. The first, styled a chorographic drama in one act, was entitled "Cléopâtre," was based on one of Gautier's tales, and unfolded the dramatic story of the archer who jilted his sweetheart for a night of the Nile Queen's love, and who, with the coming of dawn, paid for his dream of passion with a draught of the poisoned chalice. Magnificently accoutred and danced with all the seductive insinuation of the sleeping land of purple night skies by a corps of thoroughly trained members of the Imperial Ballet, this terpsichorean drama was an authoritative novelty. The Bacchanale, led by Mlle. Lydia Lopoukova, as charming a young artiste as America has welcomed within this memory, and the second part of the ballets, "Les Sylphides," also participated in by this dainty little woman, drew the decent applause of every orchestra seat where silence had previously greeted the injected fake art masquerading in nakedness. "Les Sylphides" disclosed a cool, green woodland in which some twenty young women in skirts as clean and fluffy as the beaten whites of eggs or spun cream taffy indulged in what was not inaptly called "a romantic revelry." Alexander Volinine, whose achievements are not second to Mordkin, was the only male figure in this particular dance. The third section of the ballets was known as "Sheherazade" and developed the barbaric tale of Zobeide, favorite wife of the King of the Indies, who, during the absence of her lord, admits her Arab lover into the harem. A band of blackamoors follow the Arab and a scene of wild carousal ensues with the odalisques. The revelers are suddenly surprised by the return of the King and royal guard, and, with the faithless Zobeide, are made to answer for their trespasses at the point of the sword. The final scene in the ballet, exploding at its culminative saturnalian point in a burst of blood, was direct in its sheer melodramatic effect and lost nothing even for Anglo-Saxon audiences through the

fact of its pantomimic enactment. These "RUSSIAN BALLETS" are undoubtedly the most opulently staged dances that have been thrown before our eyes. With the elimination of the mistaken lady who is less Russian than even the Russian caviar we get in our native restaurants, and who is proportionately disturbing to one's artistic stomach, the dances should achieve wide notice in a land such as ours where the two-step and the Boston Dip are inclined to be viewed as the apogees of all that is skillful, tasteful, graceful and beautiful.

In the remote suburbs of many of the larger Eastern cities and in the adjacent country districts one used to encounter many vacant and dilapidated farm-houses whose owners had experienced difficulty in the renting or selling of them. One day several years ago, however, an astute old codger conceived the idea of painting his own particular unrentable shack a gaudy red, of placing an order for a large electric sign reading "Chateau du Lion Rouge" and of hiring a nigger to sing ragtime. A week later fully five hundred automobile parties were clamoring for admittance in order that they might dine at the "inn" and enjoy the privilege of paying three dollars and fifteen cents for a ham sandwich with German mustard. Soon all the other bucolic property owners got wise and erstwhile deserted old huts were rapidly transformed into "inns" and "chateaux," into "Places de Versailles," "Petit Trouvilles" and "Imperial Taverns"—and, incidentally, into easy money.

A survey of the theatrical "star" system widely in vogue at the present day seems to indicate a definite analogy with the "inns" in several instances. That is, the analogy obtains in so far as property owners, useless property and large electric signs are concerned. The difference—or rather the joker—lies in the fact that the sponsor for the second species of enterprise, rather than the public, is invariably called upon in the end to put up for all the human hams for whom the theatergoers will not stand. All of which may or may not be taken to apply to Miss Valeska Suratt, who has

been offering a musical play entitled "THE RED ROSE" on Broadway during the frothing days. This talentless lady, aided and abetted, has persisted with admirable courage in her efforts to compel a public to accept her through the last two years and may at last be said to have reached that point where, single-handed, she is able to ruin utterly a colorful, tuneful, well mannered, and consistently entertaining play. Such a play "THE RED ROSE" might otherwise be, for the Smith brothers have done pretty good work with the libretto, Robert Hood Bowers has evolved some pleasant airs and R. H. Burnside has exercised appreciable taste in staging the production. The costumes, said to have been designed by Miss Suratt, remain the one thing to her credit. Louis De Foe says in this regard: "It would be a great public relief if this lady could be persuaded to devote herself exclusively to this line of activity."

Miss Suratt is tolerated only because of the attractiveness of the production with which she has been kindly surrounded, and is accorded attention and space here merely because her case is not an isolated one. Still, angels *will* rush in where fools fear to tread! The story of the musical comedy has to do with the love of a young American artist for a French model (dress and studio); with his father's determination to break off the match; and with the eventual discovery that the girl is the long lost daughter of a baron, thus making it all right, of course, for her to marry into an American family. There is included in the evening's presentation still another of the advertised "sensational" dances so prolific at the moment. It is called the "Students' Glide," and may be said to be sensational in the same sense and relative proportion that a captive balloon ascension, a street speech by Rose Pastor Stokes or a pink bathing suit is sensational. The whole thing, you know, depends entirely upon whether or not you happen to be a Rube.

One of the most popular delusions in the world is the belief that there has been or is something in your personal life that would provide simply elegant

material for a play. Few persons possess the astuteness, the penetration or the humor to realize that the incident that seems so dramatic to them is in reality probably a very usual, common and uninteresting incident at best and one that might find its duplicate in the personal experiences of any healthy iceman, chauffeur, barber, upstairs maid or commission merchant. Real romance and drama are as rare as the olive gray orchid of southern Egypt—and they are just as far away from the overwhelming majority of lives. Your adventure with some pretty maid whom you rescue from drowning and whose hair the sun lights up “like so much burnished copper” is the daily summer business, the month in, month out trade of each of the thirty life savers on the beach who get twenty commercial dollars a week for their services. Your experience with some street girl whom you tackle and bring to the sod of decency in the very shadow of the goal line of hell is the nightly work and the yearly profession of that big group of calm prosaicists known as the Salvation Army. And so it goes! What you consider to be your “romance,” your “drama,” is as threadbare, as commonplace and as hackneyed as the Fourth of July newspaper editorials, the conversation of young girls or the latest popular song. I venture to remark that, in the great and general average, not more than one good play out of every fifty has ever discovered its inspiration in an actual personal experience of its author.

Romance and drama have become, to an inordinately powerful degree, chiefly and purely the children of an imaginative mind. To be valid for purposes of sale, either as shelf literature or stage literature, romance and drama must be manufactured in this day like so much peanut brittle. And the nuttier it is, the better. Do I seem to contradict myself? Remember, if you think so, that I am merely setting down what appear to be facts. I take no sides. I do not say that fresh, real romance is dead. I only say it seems to be. I do not say that fresh, real drama is dead. I only say it seems to be hiding in a dark corner. What we

are pleased to call romance and drama, as revealed in the columns of the daily journals, is the same old romance and drama of our grandfathers and their grandfathers before them—and of the quills of the playwrights and novelists of both their eras and of the eras that went before. Romance and drama is one long repetition of itself. The street number and the color of the lady's hair may change, but the kiss, the slap and the final ending remain the same.

The reason for this excessive garrulity? A play by a self-confident and daring lawyer from St. Louis whose name is Thomas T. Railey. The title of the lawyer's play—“BAXTER'S PARTNER.” The subject matter of the lawyer's play—the dramatic side of the legal profession as the lawyer has seen it. The probable inspiration of the lawyer's play—a more or less direct personal experience. The outcome of the lawyer's play—failure. The moral of the thing repeated: There is not one-half so much drama and romance in our particular fields of labor as we sometimes like to believe.

We pass now, ladies and gentlemen, to the next and last exhibit on the New York summer Midway Plaisance. This exhibit, ladies and gentlemen, was and is in a class by itself. Few things like it have ever been seen in this country, and, when we say this, we make no exception in the case of the Cardiff Giant, “The London Follies” or Walter Wellman. In all the annals of drama one would have difficulty in encountering anything that might approximate what we have in this tent. Step in then, ladies and gentlemen, and see Elinor Glyn's dramatization of her own novel, “THREE WEEKS,” as performed by the Corse Payton stock company of New York, Hoboken and Brooklyn after a two seasons' exploitation in the passionate provinces! We passed in and this is an impressionistic painting of what we saw.

ACT I. “The Boudoir of the Queen in the Palace at Sardalia,” furnished with all the regal splendor and sumptuousness of a bedroom in a Sixth Avenue hotel. Enter the King, in an outfit resembling that of a Mexican bullfighter,

closely followed by the Queen, a fat frau with a marked inclination for babies and a marked disinclination for proper pronunciation. "Get me a child!" yells the King, who has been making ardent love to a bottle of whiskey during the first part of the act. "As there is a Gawd in Heaven," shouts the Queen, looking at the gallery, "I will—even if I haf t' search the world over 'nd over!" Curtain.

ACT II. "Lawn in front of the Hotel at Lucerne," a scene that had previously served in the company's other presentations as "a New England rectory" and "a cottage in the foothills of the Sierras." Enter Paul, an unlikely looking young man who wears intensely ready made clothes. He spies the Queen, disguised as a human being, seated at a table. They make eyes at each other. Paul remembers with an audible pang the sweet girl he left in England, but he has already caught the queenzy and cannot open his mouth to protest. So he opens a quart; the Queen opens the door to the bedchamber—and the curtain falls.

'Tis Act III, and according to the program we are beholding "the Loggia of the Palace at Venice." To us the scene looked suspiciously like "moonlight on the Erie Canal," but then, alas, we have no romance in us! Paul is wrestling with the Queen and a tightly fitting dress suit. They are reclining languorously on a tiger skin and from the distance are wafted the plaintive, wailing tones of a cornet. The air is full of passion, hairpins and bad acting. Enter the envoy. The Queen must return to her people who are clamoring for her. Paul breaks down. "Before I go," whispers the Queen, "I have something to say to you." Paul looks at her searchingly. "You have something to say to me?" he repeats. She comes close to him. A light spreads over his face, a spotlight over hers. "My son!" he cries in a burst of joy. Quick curtain.

Again we are in the Queen's boudoir. The King is in a bad mood. The child has been born, but the King is not satisfied. "What do you want *now*?" asks

the Queen in anger and a new dress. "Your life!" exclaims the King, which would seem to indicate that he was something of a dramatic critic. A general roughhouse ensues. The King loses his patience; the Queen loses her life; the heir to the throne loses its parents; Paul loses his head; and the audience has long since lost its self-control. It applauds long and loud. It yells for "speeches." It hurls flowers across the footlights in tribute to its histrionic favorites and to what it regards as a profound drama. Therein lies the joke. And yet the Constitution of these United States has the effrontery to declare all of its citizens free and equal! Equal!! *Do you get that?* Isn't it enough to drive one to drink—or England?

What a bath this has been! Even yet am I loth to emerge from its crystal depths and desert its porcelain shores. But I have been warned that it is a dangerous thing to be seized with writer's cramp while in the water—and caution bids me beware. Before I go, however, I—like the Queen—have something to say to you. Only this time it isn't a kid. It's serious. I wish to call to your attention a welcome bark that has been heard during the dog days. Messrs. Wagenhals and Kemper, a pair of particularly astute managerial fellows, have taken their stand on the mountain top and have cried across the lowlands that in the future they will engage no so-called "stars" for their productions, but will employ only capable actors and actresses. No happier news has reached my ears in many days. Were a few of these producers' brother managers to make similar announcement, I should feel safe in predicting an especially prosperous season. I have regularly held my pen in check when it has urged me to inveigh against the "star system," for the simple reason that the subject is so very tiresome, and for the further and even simpler reason that everybody (except the "stars") knows perfectly well that the system in question is an injurious one. And I am not going to begin now. But all hail, Wagenhals and Kemper!!

A 1911 MODEL DREAM BOOK

By H. L. Mencken

THE New Thought, taking it by and large, is probably the most prosperous lunacy ever invented by mortal man. Every one of its multitudinous sub-lunacies, from psychical research to anti-vaccination, from vegetarianism to the Emmanuel Movement, and from zoöphilism to Neo-Buddhism, is gaining converts daily and making excellent profits for a hords of male, female and neuter missionaries. Why work at gravel roofing or dishwashing in the heat of the day when you can open a table tapping studio in any convenient furnished room house and rake in the willing dollars of the feeble-minded, the while you make their eyes bulge and the xanthous freckles on their necks go lemon pale? As a communicative New Thinker of my acquaintance once said, Mind is a darn powerful thing. What causes chilblains to afflict the slaves of error, banjos to tinkle in dark cabinets, veiled (and fat) she-wizards to read the number of your watch, dogs to die of non-existent rabies, dreams to come true? Mind! Matter is a mere symbol of Mind—a sort of effigy, shadow or greenback. And of the two halves of Mind (for, like all other things, it has two halves) the most potent and protean is the Subconscious. It is the Subconscious that awakens you in the middle of the night to deliver a telegram from the coroner at Zanesville, O., saying that your mother-in-law, dear old girl, has just died of lockjaw. It is the Subconscious, again, that cures you when pink pills, camomile and five doctors have failed. It is the Subconscious, yet again, that plucks the banjo in the cabinet and lifts the table from the floor and strokes you with damp, uncanny hands—while the me-

dium's *de facto* husband, out in the ante-room, is searching your overcoat for cigars.

Such is Mind. Such is the Subconscious. Such are their tricks and their gains. And yet, for all their potency and for all their prophets and profits, they, too, have enemies. Lamentable—but yet a fact! There are actually scoundrels who maintain that Eusapia Palladino, with the lights up and her feet nailed to the floor, could not lift a table, nor even a footstool—that a Christian Scientist, held under water for twenty minutes, would infallibly drown—that when Katie King looked at Sir William Crookes she could scarcely throttle her guffaws—that psychotherapy is by Emerson's Essays out of Peruna—that poor old Lombroso was an ass—that the influence of Mind upon the liver is to the influence of Liver upon the mind as a wart is to Ossa.

And now comes a new heretic—Dr. Havelock Ellis, to wit—with the scandalous allegation that the true meaning of a dream about a murder is not that the dreamer is soon to be married, or that his brother Fred, in Texas, has been trampled to death by hippopotami, or that the Athletics will win the pennant, but that deep down in the dreamer's innards, somewhere south of his Tropic of Cancer, the cartilages of last night's lobster are making a powerful resistance to digestion. In brief, Dr. Ellis presumes to maintain, in "THE WORLD OF DREAMS," his new book (*Houghton-Mifflin*), that dreaming is a physical business, almost as much so as snoring, and that the small part played in it by Mind is usually that of a low comedian.

Did you ever dream that you were

walking in air—that you were going upstairs at a gallop, but with your feet just missing the stair treads? Early in life, before I took to hard labor and ceased to dream, I used to dream that dream very often. Other folk tell me that they know it, too; Dr. Ellis says that it is very common in the young. Well, what causes it? The theosophists say that it is not a dream at all, but a real experience—that the astral body takes wing in the night and goes upon wild jaunts among the stars. The psychical researchers hold it to be either reminiscent or prophetic—a memory of something forgotten or a prevision of something to come. No doubt the Babists, the Swedenborgians, the Emmanuel Movers and the crystal gazers have other explanations—all more or less abstruse and all absurd. As for Dr. Ellis, he has a theory, too, but it is not abstruse a bit, and neither is it absurd.

Such dreams of flying, he says, are probably caused at bottom by respiratory and cardiac disturbances, the effect of sleeping in a constrained position. To the dulled brain goes a vague message that the lungs and heart are laboring, and at once an effort is made to account for the fact. What, in everyday experience, gives those organs their hardest strains? Why, the act of running upstairs, of course. It is the most violent exercise ever undertaken by the ordinary human being—and the young, to be sure, indulge in it more than the ancient and paunchy. So the brain, but one-tenth awake and one-twentieth intelligent, decides that a journey upstairs is under way. But how explain the element of aviation—the impression that the feet are not touching the stair treads? Easily enough. When the body is going to sleep it is the peripheral nerves—that is to say, the nerves just beneath the skin—that go to sleep first. Some time before the brain itself is quite inert, the skin has lost all sensation. By now, perhaps, you see what happens. The brain formulates a muddled idea of going upstairs, but no appropriate sensory impressions come from the feet. Therefore the idea that the feet are not touching the stairs is superimposed upon the first

idea, and the result is that vague dream of walking in air which most of us know.

I have here lifted but one page from Dr. Ellis's book, and that one by no means the most interesting. He has put together what must stand for a long time as the shrewdest and most comprehensive treatise upon dreams in the English language. As those readers who have read his "Man and Woman" and his "Studies in the Psychology of Sex" are aware, he is a psychologist who adds to a native ingeniousness a thorough acquaintance with the latter day psychological literature of Germany, France and Italy. In the present book he rehearses the experiments and observations of every recent investigator of importance and weighs their ideas with judicial fairness. His own conclusions are put forth, of course, not as definite theories, but merely as hypotheses—but even when they fail to account for all of the known facts, they never go counter to any of those facts. If you are at all interested in the mechanism of existence you will find his volume enormously entertaining. He is a diligent and sapient inquirer, a brave enemy of pseudo-scientific flappdoodle, a writer of sense and charm.

Another scientific fellow with something worth hearing to say is Dr. Leon C. Prince, who riddles the sophistry of the Eddyites in "THE SENSE AND NON-SENSE OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE" (*Badger*). Dr. Prince, let it be clearly understood, is no mere heaver of half-bricks. On the contrary, he has a kindly feeling for the Christian Scientists and is ready to admit that, judged empirically, their magic is genuine enough. That is to say, he grants them some of their alleged cures—not all, by any means, but still an appreciable some. Going further, he agrees with the Christian Scientists in their philosophical idealism, in their belief that the universe was created and is maintained by intelligence, and that all material things are mere condensations, as it were, of that intelligence. But to hold to that belief, he points out, by no means involves denying the practical reality of experience. A *streptococcus* and the first reader of the Mother

Church may be equally ideal and apparitional, and yet their mutual reaction is real enough—to them. Let the *streptococcus* invade the first reader and the latter will inevitably fall ill, and though it may ease his mind to deny that the *streptococcus* is there, and even help him to get well, the *streptococcus* will be there all the same.

The Christian Scientists, however, deny that it is there; and in support of their denial they argue that the apparent existence of all such carnivora is a mere illusion of mortal mind. But what is mortal mind? Nothing—or, as Mrs. Eddy once said, “nothing claiming to be something.” But how can nothing produce an effect which is undoubtedly something—the effect, to wit, of being ill—the sensation of pain? The Christian Scientists reply that it can’t: that this sensation is a pure illusion, that no pain is actually experienced. And here, of course, they go counter, not only to the overwhelming and indubitable experience of the human race, but also to the plain rules of common sense, for they speak of a thing as having illusions and in the next breath they declare that it does not exist. To have any experience whatever, whether real or illusory, a thing must obviously exist. Dead men, as someone has said, tell no tales, and neither do they see ghosts or suffer from imaginary pains. To be fooled a thing must first *be*. The imaginary cannot imagine. And so it follows that, if mortal mind experiences illusions, then mortal mind cannot be an illusion itself.

But halt—let us have done with such philosophical grappling! The Christian Scientists, I am well aware, have an answer to the objections I have here tried to put forward, and I, in turn, have an answer to their answer. Going further, they have an answer to my answer to their answer, and I have an answer to their answer to my answer to their answer. The debate stretches out infinitely; I prudently retire at the end of the first round, with my wind still in me, my eyes unblackened and all of my teeth in my gums. The discussion in Dr. Prince’s excellent little book is far more interesting and valuable than I could hope to

make it, for Dr. Prince is a better philosopher than I am, and besides, he is a fairer man. Fairness, indeed, is the hallmark of his work. The Christian Scientists will go far before they find a critic so liberal and generous, and at the same time so logical and shrewd. When you tire of novels, get his book. It is short enough to be read at one sitting, and good enough to be reread at some other sitting.

Two other serious volumes await, the first being “LOVE AND MARRIAGE,” by Ellen Key (*Putnam*) and the other “THE SUFFRAGETTE,” by E. Sylvia Pankhurst (*Sturgis-Walton*). Miss Key’s book, which has been translated out of the original Swedish by Arthur G. Chater, is a plea for a reconstruction of the marriage relation—for its reconstruction upon a rational basis. There is here no space to consider the argument in detail, and any attempt to sketch it hastily would do it injustice. Let it suffice to praise Miss Key for an honest and in the main successful attempt to throw the light of reason into a subject long obscured by sentimentalists, special pleaders and muddle-headed theologians. Miss Pankhurst’s tome is a history of militant suffragetteism, which means a history of Miss Pankhurst herself, and of her mamma, and of her two sisters, Adela and Christabel, for if the Pankhurst family be taken away not much of the movement remains. I sat down to the chronicle much prejudiced against the suffragettes; I arose from it with that prejudice considerably diluted by understanding. A lot of curious pictures accompany the text.

According to “Who’s Who in America,” “Dewing, Elizabeth Bartol, author,” was “b. New York, Nov. 27, 1885,” which is very good news indeed, for the fictioneer who achieves at twenty-five a novel so full of promise and distinction as “A BIG HORSE TO RIDE” (*Macmillan*) may be very reasonably expected by forty or fifty to bring a genuine and lasting contribution to the art of prose fiction. The one danger confronting Miss Dewing is that of swallowing overpraise—of concluding that she has mastered the trick. For over-

praise is sure to come to her, if only because the critics, ground down by their daily round of damning, hail the rare holiday with yells and swill its wine of change a bit recklessly. Inelegant and mixed figures—but you catch the idea. As for this book, it sticks out from the desert of machine-made American fiction like a tall oak from the plain. It has coherence, design, clarity, color, individuality, a point of view, an air—all the qualities which distinguish a work of art from a work bearing the union label. Instead of merely telling a tale, it essays to explain, account for, analyze that tale. Its appeal is not to those who demand only that things happen incessantly, but to those who search for light as to *why* things happen. Specifically it is a character study of a great dancer—an attempt to penetrate that baffling attitude of mind, or spiritual essence, or form of insanity, or whatever you choose to call it, upon which some forgotten ass bestowed the name of artistic temperament. Rosé Carson conquers Christendom with her dancing, but at the game of love she fails. Just how and why she fails Miss Dewing tries to show us, and succeeds—almost. A novel which misses by a hairsbreadth. A book which gives a plain promise of better things to come.

Another suave piece of writing is "HALF-LOAVES," by Helen Mackay (*Duffield*), a first novel by a writer whose short sketches in the French manner I noticed a year or so ago. The story itself is of simple design. Florida Marvin, outraged by her husband's light-hearted polygamies, flees from him and England and seeks forgetfulness in the Italian village of her childhood. But what she actually finds there is not forgetfulness, but a sort of brave charity. Life, she discovers, is a pretty bitter business all round. There are worse things in the world—far, far worse—than living with Jack Marvin, just as there are far worse men than Jack himself. And the secret of living is not to struggle, to cry out and to plot operatic revenges, but to serve and suffer with eyes to the front. So back she goes to Jack—who is to her, one may say, what the cattle boats were to Mulholland. A

sad story, with a faint reminiscence of "Dodo" in it, but one that also shows a true artistic feeling and a considerable fluency of expression.

Such novels of distinction are rare among us, but the supply of honest trade goods never falters. Here, for example, comes the diligent Arthur Hornblow with still another novelization, this time of Charles Klein's banal melodrama, "THE GAMBLERS" (*Dillingham*). The artistic quality of a Hornblow novelization is midway between that of the original Klein play and that of a vaudeville song, and yet there seems to be a steady and a profitable market for all three things. By the same token there is also a steady market for what may be called the standard novel of commerce—that novel which contains the maximum of startling incident and the minimum of intelligible idea. For example, "THE PRICE," by Gertie de S. Wentworth-James (*Kennerley*), an utterly preposterous tale about an airman who is pursued to his death by an amorous married woman. It would be difficult to imagine more dreary drivel than that Mrs. Wentworth-James has here manufactured, and yet the book will probably sell ten times as well as "Lord Jim." Another "THE PRICE," this one by Francis Lynde (*Scribner*), shows vastly better workmanship, but here, too, highly improbable incident takes the place of observation and most of the characters are mechanical toys. "THE STOLEN SINGER," by Martha Bellinger (*Bobbs-Merrill*), seems to be another of the same sort, but to that I cannot swear, for I have found it impossible to read more than a few odd chapters. "THE FIRST LAW," by Gilson Willets (*Dillingham*), and "THE MAN WITHOUT A FACE," by Albert Boissière (*Dillingham*) are even worse—cheap thrillers which differ from dime novels chiefly in price. And so follow trade goods of other brands—"THE SPIRIT OF THE ISLAND," by Joseph Hornor Coates (*Little-Brown*), a mawkish tale of love; "ANNA MALLEEN," by George H. Brennan (*Kennerley*), a story of the stage, with weak attempts at humor; "THE DAWN MEADOW," by G. A. Dennen

(*Badger*), a new variation of the standard cast-away-on-a-desert-island romance; and "DAWN OF THE MORNING," by Grace Livingston Hill Lutz (*Lippincott*), in which the orthodox difficulties and heartaches are eased by the orthodox hug on the last page. Such stuff does no harm, perhaps, but what pleasure can any intelligent human being get out of reading it?

In "AN OLD MAID'S VENGEANCE," by Frances Powell (*Scribner*), we see how the opulent Winifred Cryden, a virgin at fifty-six and regretting the fact exceedingly, falls in love with Monsieur Ulaszlo de Noiraud of the Hungarian noblesse; how he thirsts for her negotiable securities but cannot bring himself, as it were, to swallow her face; how she sends for her beautiful cousin, young Elinor Laddoon, and sets her upon poor Ulaszlo, with the aim of tearing his heart to tatters; how this foul scheme of revenge works so admirably that Ulaszlo runs amuck and commits a murder—and many other unpleasant and preposterous things. A queer composition, certainly! In "MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY," by Owen Wister (*Macmillan*), we breathe cleaner air, for once more we are in Wyoming and once more the fantastic Scipio Le Moyne is at his tricks. There are eight tales in the book, and they represent Mr. Wister's agreeable scribbling during ten years. To the collection he hangs a somewhat labored preface, in which he mourns the passing of the Wyoming of the day before yesterday. Today the denizens of that once romantic State have telephones in their houses and wear detachable cuffs. *Eheu fugaces, Postume, Postume, labuntur anni!* More tales of the West are in "YELLOWSTONE NIGHTS," by Herbert Quick (*Bobbs-Merrill*), not to mention certain tales of the East and South, and descriptions of the Yellowstone scenery hold them together. Some of them drag a bit, but others are extremely well done. "ORPHANS," by Helen Dawes Brown (*Houghton-Mifflin*), admits us to the pitiful tragedy of two youngsters whose parents are divorced. Henry James, alas, has got us into the bad habit of thinking of it as a comedy.

More novels! "THE GARDEN OF THE SUN," by Capt. T. J. Powers, U.S.A. (*Small-Maynard*), is a tale of love, daring and scandal in the Philippines. It doesn't take Capt. Phil. Ballard of the cavalry more than a few minutes to win the heart of Barbara Bennett, but the business of winning her hand is far more deliberate and fatiguing; for in the first place Phil is also beloved by other women and one of them makes a savage effort to ensnare him, and in the second place Barbara has a husband on her hands, and that husband is a long while drinking himself to death. As a matter of fact, he has to help out the Rum Demon in the end by opening an artery with a penknife. Then Phil and Barbara meet in a grapple which makes them tremble "like blossoms shaken by a honey-mad bee." It seemed to Barbara "that the stars swayed in their circuits and tumbled in their accustomed places. . . . She lay pulsating on the breast of her lover, clinging to him for support in the vertiginous whirl." Just as exciting, but far less absurd is "IN HER OWN RIGHT," by John Reed Scott (*Lippincott*), in which we see how Geoffrey Croyden, a very excellent young man, is ruined by the failure of Royster & Axtell; how his ruin makes him hesitate to sue for the hand of the rich Elaine Cavendish, whom he loves; how he decides to bury himself on a little property he owns on the Eastern Shore of Maryland; and how, prowling about that property, he happens upon two or three barrels of pirate gold, and so is made opulent again and takes Elaine into his arms, making her happy, himself happy and the romantic reader happy. A brisk and cleanly tale, but not one that you will remember for more than twenty minutes.

"THE CROSS OF HONOUR," by Mary Openshaw (*Small-Maynard*), is a story of Napoleon's first Russian campaign, with the little Emperor himself in the lover's role. Such quasi-historical fictions, of course, have been long out of fashion, but this one has merit enough to make it worth reading. A certain plausibility lingers about the Napoleon that the author draws; he may not be

the genuine Napoleon of Austerlitz and Borodino, but all the same he is far from a stuffed dummy. "GEORGE THORNE," by Norval Richardson (*Page*), is a somewhat ambitious study of remorse. Young Thorne, at twenty-four, succeeds in convincing old Winston Livingstone that he is the latter's long lost son, kidnapped in childhood—and thereafter he makes acquaintance with the surprising fact that stolen sweets may be very bitter. Finally his outraged conscience drives him to confession—but if you want to know the rest you must read the book. Mr. Richardson's incidents, being often improbable, handicap him sorely in his writing, but there is still a considerable promise in his work and no doubt he has greater achievement ahead of him.

To the excellent MODERN AUTHORS' SERIES of foreign short stories (*Brown*) three new volumes have just been added. One of them is "A Red Flower," a fantastic picture of insanity by Vsevolod Garshin, one of the younger Russians of the day; the other two are by Frank Wedekind, the German author of "The Awakening of Spring," which I reviewed some time ago. Wedekind's peculiarly grotesque imagination is well exhibited in "The Grisley Suitor," a tale obviously designed to shock the Philistines to death. The same note appears in "Rabbi Ezra," which gives its title to the second Wedekind volume, but in "The Victim," which accompanies it, there is greater seriousness. It is to be hoped that this series will eventually include some of the delightful stories and sketches of Otto Julius Bierbaum, an ornament, like Wedekind, of the *Überbrettel* movement in Germany, but a man of far more humor and human kindness. The "Yankeedoodle-Fahrt" should be done into English by all means, not to mention some of the delightful medieval tales in the manner of Anatole France. There is, too, Bierbaum's poetry, some of which has been already translated by Percival Pollard. Certainly American readers should be better acquainted with so merry and melodious a fellow.

A paragraph for the poets, and particularly for Damon Runyon, whose

slim volume, "THE TENTS OF TROUBLE" (*FitzGerald*), is filled with imitations of Kipling so full of spirit that Kipling himself might be glad to own some of them. Do you remember Robert W. Chambers's "The Recruit"? Well, here are a score or more of such Rudyardian fancies, not to mention a number of pretty pieces in more sentimental moods. From bellows to whispers! The verses of Anne Cleveland Cheney, in "BY THE SEA" (*Sherman-French*), are of the *Atlantic Monthly* school—correct and ladylike compositions with no more real emotion in them than so many cadenzas. In "THROUGH DUST TO LIGHT," by Robert Valentine Heckscher (*Sherman-French*) and the "DEVOTIONAL POEMS" of Eugene B. Read (*Sherman-French*) hollow platitudes take the place of ideas.

And now to make an end. "ABROAD WITH THE FLETCHERS," by James Felton Sampson (*Page*), is the extremely labored and tedious story of a commonplace gallop through Europe. "THE CAREER OF THE CHILD," by Maximilian P. E. Grosamann (*Badger*), is an elaborate treatise upon educational psychology and methods. "THE VERY LITTLE PERSON," by Mary Heaton Vorse (*Houghton-Mifflin*), is a new version of the ever amusing comedy of Young Papa, Young Mamma and Little Bright Eyes, with capital pictures by Rose O'Neill. "THE PATIENT OBSERVER," by Simeon Strunsky (*Dodd-Mead*), is a collection of half-serious, half-extravagant essays upon all things under the sun, from the discomforts of a paunch to the horrors of dining with a bride and groom. "THE GIRL WHO DISAPPEARS," by Gen. Theodore A. Bingham (*Badger*), is a tract in favor of the segregation of vice—a tract which must needs offend all professional moralists by the fact that it is full of good sense. "THE WEST IN THE EAST," by Price Collier (*Scribner*), is the record of an American's observations in India, China and Japan. Mr. Collier sees little to fear in Japan's progress or in the native unrest in India, but he counsels us to keep a weather eye on John Chinaman.

SHOPPING FOR THE SMART SET

By Marion C. Taylor

THE SMART SET SHOPPING DEPARTMENT will be glad to offer suggestions or answer questions regarding shopping and the New York shops. Readers of THE SMART SET inquiring for names of shops where articles described are purchasable should enclose a stamp for reply, and state page and month. Address: "EDITOR, SMART SET SHOPPING DEPARTMENT."

IT is still too early to speak authoritatively about fall fashions, although one hears rumors galore. This is the period when rumors run rampant and there is no limit to their extravagance. If we believed even part of what we hear we should form a strange idea of the forthcoming styles, for while one authority is quoted as predicting very wide full skirts another claims we shall not give up the straight silhouette; and so it goes, each taking one side or another, and when finally the frocks themselves appear in a month or so one's chief surprise is usually at the lack of difference from last season's styles.

I mean it is this way: Visit an "opening" and look about you—every dressmaker and every observant customer who attends says: "Did you notice that peculiar panier? Paniers must be returning to style;" and she jots it down. Or, "Did you notice how few short sleeves there are?" and that goes down. But in reality, if she but stops to think, there is little to merit the great amount of prior discussion given the subject; there is no great change to warrant so much talk. Naturally the woman who wears the clothes—and she has something to say, after all—does not change in a month or so from a two-yard skirt to one of three yards and a half. These changes are very gradual, and the most one can do is to note them as they appear and appreciate their bearing on the tendency of style in general.

For instance, at the French races this summer—and everyone seems to consider the costumes worn there indicative of fall styles—several points were noted. Narrow fringe is used plentifully; taffetas are surging more and more to the fore; fichus, instead of being out of fashion by this time, as I believed they would be, are worn more than ever; hats in all-white are very prominent and the chic mondaine wore smart small fur wraps over her frocks, a fashion which never has been prominent in this country, where it is an established custom to send one's entire stock of furs to cold storage about the first of May. And I can't imagine why this should be, for nothing is prettier than a touch of soft fur against the delicate background of filmy lace or chiffon, and there isn't anything more becoming.

I saw a little narrow silk fringe worn this spring generally around the bottom of "1830" taffeta frocks, and it was a very smart pretty fashion; but being one so easily copied, I fear for its life, as I have already seen "ready to wear" frocks trimmed in it and marked, I think, twenty-nine fifty.

Everybody has taken to the French fashion of wearing felt hats for outing and traveling, and they really are very practical as well as novel; they have almost no trimming, generally a smart bow or knot, sometimes of grosgrain ribbon, sometimes of straw—depending for their *chic* upon the outline and delicate beauty of the coloring of the felt.

I cannot say that I notice any decided preference for one color, although I believe the rumor that we are to see less vivid colors and more soft old-fashioned tones.

Skirts are going to flare more around the feet, but rather for comfort than anything else; and the added width will be achieved more by the use of plaits and insets than by any change in cut. I believe we are to see many long frocks for semi and formal wear, and I am glad for I could never see the beauty of an elaborate short frock on any but the most attractive svelte figure, while a frock immediately gains *cachet* by lying a couple of inches on the ground, even if it does not trail. We have about seen the end of the kimono sleeve, as it no longer fits in with the era we are tending toward, and I should not be surprised to see quite a few bell sleeves ending a little below the elbow.

Hats, like frocks, are becoming more individual, and it is absolutely impossible to select any one style as prevailing, for one sees becoming smart hats of every size and shape.

Frocks

If a woman thinks of any frocks at all this season it is of those handy "trotteur" affairs that one can jump into at a moment's notice and feel cool and comfortable in for shopping or a short trip. But in buying she is not content with spring and summer models for she realizes that a frock of this description even if not worn through the winter is ideal to slip into in spring if it is still in style. Consequently I have been hunting about to find some good new models and fortunately found not only some that are excellent in style but more than usually reasonable in price. These are sold by a firm who will make them to your own measure at no extra charge, a great boon. The first is a cheviot which was especially good in black and blue with a narrow colored stripe, made with black satin collar and Marie Antoinette revers which narrowed in back; it had a normal waist line and the skirt which fastened invisibly at the

side front had a few gathers in back. A band encircled it at knee depth and this (about ten inches deep) was slit up at either side and trimmed with bone buttons. The stitched belt was of the material. This was only twenty-two ninety-five, which I hope will not cause you to doubt its effectiveness.

Two blue serges which sold for only fifteen dollars were extremely simple but very good style. The first had a deep pointed rever at one side of the waist, and what I shall call a rever for want of a better name, on one side of the skirt. These and the turn-back cuffs and tiny loops which trimmed the plain side of the waist were of a soft-toned blue-striped velvet, a corduroy in effect.

The second, appealing to me especially, had a simple waist with pointed collar of contrasting satins. Green and blue braid which trimmed it gave the effect of simple embroidery. The green again showed at the slightly raised waist line and the braiding was repeated on the front tablier while the one which hung in the back was plain. A description does not do justice to this little frock which had no little style. Of a different character entirely, but coming I'm sure under the heading "utility frocks," was a demure little crêpe Meteor with its very high waist line. A deep square Cluny lace collar hung in back, reaching to the belt. A double row of tiny silk-covered buttons trimmed it down the entire front, and also trimmed the flat bow of a contrasting shade of velvet which finished the V-shaped neck in front. Another of these bows minus the buttons finished the belt in back. This same color was repeated in a piping above the deep hem of the cuffs. This was only twenty-nine fifty in this establishment but I happen to know that sixty-five dollars is its price at an exclusive Avenue shop.

Personal Negligees

There is possibly more chance for individuality in negligees than in any other costume a woman wears, just as there is more latitude allowable; and

most women like to exercise both privileges. To these women a negligee of delicate crêpe, cashmere, charmeuse, etc., combined with filmy lace and delicately hand-painted, is bound to appeal when each particular negligee is made to order for the customer and individualized to suit her style and complexion.

With this idea in mind, a concern here in town is making really exquisite matinees, negligees and other dainty accessories all hand-painted in a really beautiful manner unlike the poor attempts usually deemed all that is necessary on satins, silks, etc. I especially admired a pink taffeta daintily lined with China silk, the upper part inset with delicate Valenciennes lace and painted in soft-toned roses at twenty-seven dollars. For a bride they were sending a soft charmeuse matinee trimmed with Irish lace and delicately painted with orange blossoms. But quite the most attractive idea was that of the two matinees of silk or cashmere, flower-painted, one for the mother and one for the baby's layette, an especially appropriate and unusual idea for a gift, I thought.

Riding Habits

Somehow it has never been possible to get a smart riding habit ready made. The cut was never correct, and most women would rather skimp on anything than a riding habit. However, demand will create supply sooner or later, and now it is possible to buy the very smartest sort of habits of every description at really reasonable prices. The shop that is responsible for this boon was foresighted enough to see the results that were possible if well cut habits of good material were placed on the market at a fair price, and so they show them from thirty-nine fifty up. At this price they come in several models, first, a well cut semi-fitted coat with a semi-apron, sometimes called a safety skirt—also a long coat and breeches, and thirdly a short, straight line coat and a shell skirt accompanied by breeches. These models are the best the market affords, and come in smart black and white checks, crava-

netted cloth in oxfords and dirt shades and in unfinished worsteds and tweeds.

At forty-nine fifty an attractive smart habit was shown me in a splendid shade of dull brown melton. It was a three-piece, semi-fitting coat, breeches and shell skirt, the latter to be dispensed with if necessary.

At fifty-nine fifty a beautifully soft one was made of Worumbo covert cloth, and would make an excellent habit for fall wear. The skirts and coats of these habits were all rubber, reinforced where necessary. For mountain or any hard use I saw two splendid ones. The first came in a pleasant soft shade of army khaki, a great improvement on the usual color, and giving twice the wear of the ordinary quality. The coat was a smart hip length Norfolk model, and the skirt the same practical shell one, with convenient pockets on the hips, buttons in front and clamps behind. This cost eighteen fifty, and breeches to accompany it five ninety-five. The second came in the "all-proof" (briars, water, dust, etc.) corduroy, and was made in the same model at twenty-nine fifty including khaki breeches to be worn with it.

I saw some very new separate vests in black stripes on such smart colored grounds as mustard, green and English pink. Good-looking derbies and a straight-brimmed felt sailor were only four fifty.

Misses and Children's Habits

In this department several good models were shown me from a Norfolk coat and breeches in covert or check at twenty-nine fifty to a children's habit, perfect in every detail, at fourteen fifty.

Here are also sold accessories for women, misses and children, well made, well fitting puttees in pig or calfskin at five fifty, khaki leggings at one ninety-five and no end of stocks in all heights for one dollar.

Boudoir Caps

There is such a growing demand for boudoir caps and women have found

them so becoming and such a convenience that I wish to recommend a line of them which are constantly being imported by a firm who deal in nothing else and consequently show the newest ideas in them and the largest variety at all prices. From those made of Leirre lace or a fine quality of Brussels net, lined with silk or mousseline de soie and trimmed with delicate flowers, to the simpler ones of dotted swiss or sheer lawn, more simply trimmed with a ribbon bow, they all show taste in coloring and materials.

Shoes

I notice that so many smart young people wear the flat low-heeled pump which besides being a great comfort is decidedly good style with simple morning costumes and especially good with linens, etc. One of the best boot makers in town—well known for the very superior grade and cut of shoes he sells—has them for only five dollars—only—because the cut and make are faultless, and for this the price is low.

Midsummer Bags

Splendid bags for immediate use, to tide one over to the fall season, are done in what is known as Madagascar work, and are made of a material somewhat resembling raffia but softer. The model is a flat envelope one, lined with an attractive Persian print silk and containing a small flat purse and a fan. The price, three fifty, puts them within anyone's reach.

Solid Perfume

Solid perfume—this may sound peculiar but it is an established fact. Used as a sachet these solid waxlike cakes, which come in one's favorite odor, are especially desirable for perfuming one's lingerie and linens. When the odor seems to have left them it is only necessary to scratch the surface sufficiently to bring a fresh surface to view, and the odor is once more strong as ever. These little cakes are put up

very attractively and only cost seventy-five cents each, while there is seemingly no end to their life.

Gardenia Perfume

There has always been quite a demand for a good gardenia perfume among lovers of the flower, and although almost every manufacturer has one on the market, and several of them are good, I have never been able to find one that really smelled like gardenias until I was persuaded to try one last week, which really reproduced the odor. It is put up by a well known Paris perfumer and is more like the natural flowers than any I have come upon.

Household Accessories

I saw an odd brass tea kettle the other day which swung on a little tripod in a quaint fashion, and another which hung on the lower of two bars which topped two perpendicular rods, both real Japanese models, direct from the Orient and just a little out of the ordinary. Each was priced at four dollars and a half.

At this same shop they show the familiar but very necessary brass tea caddies for only fifty cents, and finger bowls of brass in several Oriental designs for twenty-five cents apiece.

I saw a one-piece brass umbrella stand for only two seventy-five which is about one-half what some stores ask for them.

New lampshades just imported for table use on candles show a tendency toward height rather than breadth, and come in delicate combinations of lace and linen fabric; some of the more expensive ones have decorations of gold lace and flowers, and those for boudoir use are shown in adorable prints with an edging of heavy crochet lace that is most attractive. I notice so many old time draught shades of rock crystal and glass used on both glass and mahogany candlesticks, and for a home in any of the Colonial periods their use is a splendid choice.

A basket I saw the other day appealed

greatly to me as a useful gift. It was called a "household basket" and was made of English willow ware lined with morocco and had four large compartments for card, mucilage and paste. The bottom of the center had spaces divided off for nails, etc., while a top tray or easel which fitted over this had such necessary tools as hammer, screw drivers, etc., attached to it. It is so seldom that such useful things as this are put up in a slightly fashion that its appeal was instantaneous.

For the Invalid

Quite the nicest idea I have come across in this line is a table of light or dark mahogany which has little folding legs at either end, a railing around three sides with the necessary curve to fit the body at one side, standing in all about twelve inches high. To fit on this if desired is a desk pad of morocco which has one side devoted to a perpetual calendar and a portfolio for stationery, the other given over to a safety ink well, a rubber, scissors, pencil and pen while the center space holds the large blotter. The little table costs seven dollars and fifty cents and the blotter eight dollars and twenty-five cents. The former alone is such an acceptable gift as its uses are many.

A Delightful Worktable

One of the most satisfactory as well as attractive worktables I have seen is adapted from an English model and is called the "Pembroke." Its base has three duck bill feet and it has a top sixteen by fourteen inches. This is quite deep and contains a real English morocco leather cabinet which has three compartments; the center one cushioned and left empty for one's work and the side ones and top finished with very complete fittings, even to hooks and eyes and buttons. The cabinet I saw was of an attractive dark-toned green leather and the lining of a similar toned green satin. Its price of fifty-four dollars was not much for a solid mahogany table of the best workmanship.

In this same shop I saw perfect copies of the familiar Martha Washington sewing table of solid mahogany, for only twenty-nine dollars.

Dining Room Furniture

In looking over the beautiful collection in one of the most interesting furniture shops in town I came across a dining room set, sideboard and table, with which any of several styles of chairs might be used, that was so delicately beautiful in design, so sound and dependable in construction and of such beautiful mahogany—all solid, drawers and every bit, for so fair a price that I decided to give space to it at this time when one's mind is turning to furnishings for one's town house. It was of the Sheraton period, ideal for the attractive white enamel dining rooms seen in so many homes.

The sideboard was five feet long with a beautiful swell front and delicate tapering legs. It had three drawers at the top and three cupboards, the center one having two sliding trays for silver. Graceful lines of inlay gave it the required lightness.

The round table measures fifty-four inches with ten feet extension possibilities, and here the beauty of the inlay was especially noticeable in the legs. The board sold for ninety-five dollars and the table eighty dollars while several Sheraton models of chairs were twelve dollars for the straight and seventeen for the armchairs.

Tables

A fascinating little mahogany affair called a "tuckaway" table is octagonal in shape when open and has a small drawer in one side. It is seventeen inches wide and twenty-four inches high and shuts up in such a convenient fashion as to merit its name. It costs but nine dollars.

An English tea table is low and cozy looking and has drop leaves which cause it to take up very little space. It measures when open twenty-eight inches in width and is only twenty-three

inches high and its price is twenty-two dollars.

The popular gate leg table, thirty-one by twenty-six inches and twenty-eight inches high, has a drawer in it and owing to the work on the delicate legs is thirty dollars.

A Remarkable Tea Tray

You can call it a table if you wish for it is either. Made of mahogany, seventeen and one-half by twenty-eight inches, it has the usual rim around it, and except that it has two small unobtrusive handles under the usual decorative ones it looks like any other tray as the maid brings it in. You wonder perhaps what she is going to put it on as she comes nearer and nearer until when she is at your side presto—legs spring down from underneath and the tray becomes a table.

It is the ideal arrangement for tea when one's space is scant, and then too it is equally practical for a tray, for there is not the slightest suggestion of legs when they are folded under. It is called the "Osterley tea tray" and sells for twenty-four dollars.

Chairs

A splendid solid mahogany armchair called the Whitney, comfortable and attractive, was only thirteen dollars.

The famous Fireside armchair with its three-sided back and its delicate feather leaf carving was thirty-four dollars in muslin or attractive art ticking, while I saw some Chippendale claw and ball chairs of solid mahogany with leather seats for only nine dollars, which is very reasonable for good furniture.

For Men

There is no remarkable change in men's apparel to note unless it is the gradual tendency toward fitted sack coats. I see some that are not quite so loose and comfortable looking but seem to cling a little more to the figure and are very smooth fitting. There has

been so great a demand for those bow-pointed collars that one smart firm in town who imported what they thought was a generous supply are bewailing the fact that they could have sold many times the amount. However, one of the well known collar makers has put a very good model on the market even cheaper than the English one, and this has the long points so essential.

Reasonable Silk Shirts

There seems to be more demand than ever for wash silk shirts, which, besides being cool and comfortable, wear well and are smart and becoming. Unfortunately they are usually quite expensive, as the silk retails from one dollar per yard up, but I came across a line of them the other day in a good quality of silk in most attractive narrow stripes in colors on a white ground and in oxford and white with the usual soft cuffs for only three fifty. A still better grade of a heavier silk in similar patterns sells at only four fifty, which is much below the usual price.

Smart Ties

In one of the exclusive haberdasher's I notice very good-looking bow ties in all sorts of bright-colored striped combinations, which are made of banding such as is used around hats. They are very suitable for midsummer wear and being made by this establishment is enough recommendation as to their correctness. They sell for one dollar.

A Smart Eyeglass

So many men object to the appearance of the ordinary eyeglass with evening dress that for them a new style has recently been placed on the market by one of the leading opticians here in town who caters to a class of people who demand the best. It resembles a monocle, in that the glasses are round, increasing the field of vision, and is especially designed for men, although it is possible to use it as a lorgnette also. It has special qualifications for comfort

as the nose-guard is wide and fits easily without pinching. But its chief charm is that it closes up and may be carried on a ribbon, giving every appearance of a monocle. It is made in both gold and platinum.

For the Bath

Anyone who has never used a soap bowl probably considers it an expensive luxury or possibly a foolish extravagance, but talk to the man who has used one and you will hear another story. An especially satisfactory bowl has been placed on the market by one of the leading importers of toilet accessories, and it is accompanied by a Tampico brush, not unlike a huge shaving brush in effect but delightful to use, they tell me. This huge bowl, which lasts a great length of time, comes in several delightful odors, the most satisfactory being the violet; accompanied by the brush, it sells for two dollars and twenty-five cents and lasts an eternity.

A Serviceable Coat

Aptly called a "slip-on," cut loose and flaring, with convenient raglan shoulders—still good style in a coat of this description—was a tweed coat I saw the other day for only twenty-two fifty. It had large pockets and leather buttons, and was an exact copy of the more expensive London coats, which are such a convenience between seasons for motoring and for a hundred other uses.

For Over Night

Ideal for a day or so's stay was a so-called "zephyr weight" suitcase quite small—I should say twenty inches or so by fifteen—made without a frame, which accounted for its lightness, of cowhide leather and lined with leather, fitted with the necessary celluloid toilet articles for twenty-two fifty.

Women's Coats

There is no more popular fabric for outing coats today than the polo cloth which comes in an unlimited assortment of two-toned combinations ranging from

the delicate grays and mauves to the more practical greens, browns, etc., which are eminently suitable for early fall. In an establishment where they show a great variety of them in especially lovely color combinations I saw a new model a few days ago which had a decidedly Parisian tone to it.

Of double-faced cloth, the outer side showed a soft green tone while the lining was a beautiful plaid—and plaids are being worn much abroad and are always beautiful in these soft blanket mixtures.

This coat had a lovely collar of the plaid side which formed a hoodlike affair in back and turned up at each side to show a corner of green fastened with tortoise shell buttons. These handsome buttons were used in the front of the coat and helped make it a splendid value for nineteen dollars and fifty cents.

An Excellent Idea

A shop here in town which I discovered the other day is intended, to my way of thinking, for the woman who wishes individual china. Here they import the plain white china in the most delicate and beautiful shapes I have ever seen and decorate it to suit the customers' ideas, room, table decorations or anything the customer chooses. And the best point is that although this work is done beautifully in gold and colors which are lasting and in patterns which are of unusual beauty to say the least, the charge is very reasonable.

For instance a dinner set of fine French china, consisting of one hundred pieces (and the customer may choose these to a certain extent—that is one does not have to buy useless covered dishes and soup tureens, but may substitute other pieces) with a delicate coin gold border and a gold monogram of any style, sells for fifty dollars; and when I compare it with the sets usually sold at that price I only wonder why everybody who has fifty dollars to spend doesn't order this china. For there is nothing in better taste than a simple fine gold-bordered china, and the individuality of one's monogram adds greatly to its beauty.

A similar tea or luncheon set of fifty-six pieces (in which the same choice is allowable) sells for thirty-two dollars and fifty cents, while one of those *little-d-little* breakfast sets, which in my opinion make one of the smartest and most acceptable wedding presents possible, consists of twenty pieces and sells for only thirteen dollars and fifty cents.

I saw any number of exquisite individual designs, which lack of space forbids my describing, and I was interested to learn that artists from the shop are ready to offer suggestions in decorative color treatment to harmonize with the scheme of one's dining room equipment.

Camping Requisites

A splendid cooking set has enough utensils for six people, stove and all, and is built on the army plan and accordingly most compact. It sells for only six dollars and forty-five cents, and is highly endorsed by everyone who has used it. A splendid picnic basket, also possible as a fishing basket, is made of waterproof canvas, and so constructed that it folds up into an incredibly small space. It is large enough to hold luncheon for four or five people, and sells for one dollar seventy-five.

At the shop where I saw these things the sporting department is a great help to prospective campers. It is in the hands of a man who is a well known authority on all outdoor life, and a Bureau of Information is one of its chief advantages. Here one may find out where to fish or hunt, what to wear, or anything at all pertaining to life outdoors, and all free of charge—a splendid opportunity for getting really reliable information.

Another excellent model was also of green, but in this instance a soft leaf green, and had a lining of white, which also appeared as a piping at the seams.

Many of these coats are reversible, which gives one practically two different coats, although in the more brilliant combinations it is better to use the less conspicuous color outside and content oneself with a becoming garment.

Velour Hats

Regarding the Parisian idea of wearing felt hats the first of August, which New York has adopted with a vengeance, I saw some the other day of a particularly good quality of velour, which came in all-white and a variety of colors.

The all-white hats were the prettiest, and the price, fifteen dollars, ought to prevent them from becoming common as the white felt ones have become. The prettiest of the colors were purple and a brilliant green, which for country wear with an all-white skirt and blouse were ideal. The most popular shape seems to be a large rolling sailor, which is becoming to a large majority of women.

Italian Work

At a shop devoted to beautiful and enduring linens that are a constant joy I found several small novelties recently that were of exquisite daintiness.

First a delicate design in a candle shade in beautiful Italian embroidery—and I don't know another place in town where one can procure more than a piece or two of this work.

These lace and embroidery shades are as smart as anything for table use, although expensive. These were priced at six dollars. A tea cozy of this same work was especially practical irrespective of its beauty, for the linen cover, which was handsomely embroidered and inset with lace, could easily be removed from the satin foundation and washed when necessary.

Two pillow slips for the lingerie pillows so much in demand at present were remarkable for the fineness of the Italian work embroidery and the exquisite filet medallions inserted at intervals.

The first was heart-shaped and the embroidery curved in unison. The second, slightly oblong, showed five square medallions of filet and a mass of embroidery for twenty dollars. The former, which was even more elaborate, was twenty-two fifty.



SOMETHING PERSONAL
BY THE EDITORS

THERE is a man of our acquaintance in one of the large Eastern cities who has a theory on life. This man is an employer of Italian marble workers, and the product of his shop, in the shape of polished marble wainscoting, adorns the vestibules and corridors of some of the best homes and office buildings of his city.

This is a good useful trade, this marble shop of his, manned by efficient cutters and polishers from the land of artistic workmen—and he is justly proud of his work as it meets his eye from time to time in the various places where he has set it up. In his theory that we mentioned above, his is one of the trades that benefit humanity—along with railroading, shipbuilding and the like. But speak to him of landscape painting, music teaching, fashion designing, university research work or short story writing—the latter particularly—and he will launch into invective against these “unnecessary professions,” which to him mean merely time frittered away in labor that adds nothing useful to civilization. A professor of zoology, for instance, is in this man’s eyes a mere cumberer of the earth, and a chemical student working out a thesis on “The Attainment of the Absolute Zero in Methobenzoalcoholic Reactions” amounts to nothing more or less than that same A. Z. when it is finally attained. As for a professional writer of short stories—let this negative factor be simply eliminated at once.

Now we are not going to try to prove that this man’s views are exceedingly narrow. It may be taken for granted. But as he aired his opinion of short stories on a recent occasion, we sat and mused on a few ideas that were suggested. The short story occupies a prominent place in the literature of any nation. And no one will dispute the importance nor the usefulness of a national literature. The short story suffers from the handicap of being quickly read and quickly forgotten, and hence is by many deemed a trivial thing. Yet what towering reputations De Maupassant and Poe reared upon this foundation! As a matter of fact, a great short story is more difficult to construct than a novel. A short story must be outlined, planned and built up to a definite point; a novel may—and generally does—ramble far afield. Many novels are written in chronological sequence; they begin with what happened on a certain evening in August and trace a succession of more or less connected events till the original meeting of eyes or an episode of a dropped handkerchief culminates in the final and expected “Yes, Algernon, I am yours.”

But short stories—the real worthwhile ones—are seldom written that way. They are built, one may say, on the general lines of a bridge. The narration starts at some one place and heads straight up to a definite point. All the side events and minor circum-

stances that are introduced must be threads weaving into the main structure—the cables and I-beams of the bridge. There is further on a definite turn, the highest point in the span, and all the threads of the story having come to a head, the whole structure descends to its logical conclusion.

It requires keen skill to produce a good story. There must be a logical mind to grasp the various details, foresee the movement of the plot and point all the disjointed threads in the direction of the final denouement. There must be the ability to comprehend character, realize what the normal man or woman would do or say under the circumstances presented, and there must be present a rare and too little appreciated quality, the power to influence the reader's mind, to take him by the metaphorical hand and lead his thought along a certain marked-out path to observe the landmarks pointed out by the storyteller and pass by the others, and come out at last on a broad ground of complete sympathy and understanding. A skillful author can take his reader with him as it were blindfolded and persuade him to endorse the most unusual doctrines; his power over his audience is as great as that of many an orator popularly styled silver-tongued.

It goes without saying that there is many a sermon preached in a short story—preached in a subtle, unconscious way but more impressive than any amount of ordinary sermonizing. A tract makes an argument for a certain theory in life; a short story may present an animated moving picture of that theory put in practice. This is often the case with the fiction we publish, though, as its readers know, *THE SMART SET* has no ambition to turn pulpiteer. As we are fond of reiterating, our prime purpose is to provide lively entertainment for minds that are not primitive. This being our slogan, it follows that the stories in *THE SMART SET* are real life stories. They are not "uplift" stories, such as certain magazines use. Indeed, some of the pictures they present are disagreeable. Yet the letters we get indicate that our readers like

them for their fidelity to life as it is, for their portrayal of the same human struggles and temptations and shortcomings and moral victories that they themselves have known.

Some of the stories we publish fall short. It is no easier to get good fiction all the time than it is to get good workmen for a factory or a good steak at a restaurant. Still, we believe that a very large proportion of the fiction in *THE SMART SET*, if subjected to a strict analysis, will show the hallmarks of skillful workmanship. And there will usually be found a strong basic idea. In fact, there is such a highly dramatic quality about most *SMART SET* stories that a great many of them find their way to the stage. Readers would be surprised to learn the number of successful plays that have been built up around or have employed incidentally ideas suggested in *SMART SET* stories. The direct connection between one of the big dramatic successes of a few years back, "The Heir to the Hoorah," and a *SMART SET* short story has been made widely known through a court decision. Two prominent theatrical managers have mentioned *THE SMART SET* as one of the sources to which they turn first in search of available dramatic material.

Still, some readers do not care for the stories we publish. We have been pained to receive this letter recently:

I have *wondered* quite disconsolately ever since I received the first number of *THE SMART SET* by what unfortuitous circumstance, or by what unknown Sin of Omission or Commission I was being made the victim of some unknown malevolent persecutor who sought to wreak some petty reving [revenge?] on me for some fancied injury by sending *THE SMART SET* to me regularly. I have often been tempted to write and aske who thrown away three good dollars in such a manner.

This reader's "intir" [entire?] family, he says, share his views, and the magazine lands eventually in the "wast paper pile." That one who wears the prefix "Professor" and trails after him the sounding letters S. S. D. should be so unsympathetic is of course a painful thought, but being ordinary mortals ourselves we are content to submit our case to the laity.